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HISTORY

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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

POCUMTUCK VALLEY

MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

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1930-1938



VOL. VIII

DEERFIELD, MASS., U. S. A.

PUBLISHED BY THE ASSOCIATION.

1950

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REPORT

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Volume VIII. of the History and Proceedings of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association is herewith submitted. It covers the period from 1930 to 1938 inclusive and has been edited and published under a vote of the Association at the annual meeting of 1950.

It has been necessary to abridge this volume to a considerable extent owing to an increase in the cost of printing, but all unpublished tributes and articles will be on file in Memorial Hall.

The edition is limited to 250 paper-bound copies.

Respectfully submitted,

*Research Committee*

{ Henry Flynt, Pres.  
Elizabeth Boyden, Vice-Chairman  
Mary W. Fuller  
Richard Arms  
Amelia F. Miller

Deerfield, May 13, 1950

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# THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

I. The first part of the history of the United States is the history of the colonies. The colonies were founded by Englishmen, and they were at first governed by the British government. The colonies were at first governed by the British government, and they were at first governed by the British government.

II. The second part of the history of the United States is the history of the American Revolution. The American Revolution was a war between the colonies and the British government. The American Revolution was a war between the colonies and the British government.

III. The third part of the history of the United States is the history of the American Republic. The American Republic was founded in 1787, and it was at first governed by the Articles of Confederation. The American Republic was founded in 1787, and it was at first governed by the Articles of Confederation.

IV. The fourth part of the history of the United States is the history of the American Civil War. The American Civil War was a war between the Northern states and the Southern states. The American Civil War was a war between the Northern states and the Southern states.

V. The fifth part of the history of the United States is the history of the American West. The American West was a region of the United States that was discovered by the Spanish. The American West was a region of the United States that was discovered by the Spanish.

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# ANNUAL MEETING—1930

## REPORT

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At Deerfield on February 25th the first celebration in western Massachusetts of the tercentenary of the state was held in connection with the 60th annual meeting of our Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. President Jennie M. Arms Sheldon presided and Treasurer George Arms Sheldon reported the financial condition of the association and read the record made by Secretary William L. Harris. The report by Mrs. Sheldon as curator showed that Memorial hall had a very large number of visitors who came from most states of the union and many foreign countries, and Miss Mellen read a list of the schools, societies and organizations represented. Among the gifts received during the past year was an excellent portrait of Chief Justice Aiken, the four Field portraits, a map of the Deerfield trees and a booklet containing the tree census.

The officers elected were: *President*, J. M. A. Sheldon; *Vice Presidents*, George A. Sheldon and Francis Nims Thompson; *Recording Secretary*, William L. Harris; *Corresponding Secretary*, N. Theresa Mellen; *Treasurer*, George A. Sheldon. The *Council* consists of these officers and Winthrop P. Abbott, Jonathan P. Ashley, Ellen St. Clair Birks, Helen C. Boyden, Mary W. Fuller, Minnie E. Hawks, Charles W. Hazelton, Margaret Miller, W. Herbert Nichols, Sarah A. Pratt, S. Willard Saxton, Mary P. Wells Smith, Arthur H. Tucker, Margaret C. Whiting and Albert L. Wing.

To the afternoon meeting of members and friends, seated in straight-backed antique chairs in the crowded council room, Mrs. Sheldon read her touching tribute to John Sheldon, second president of the association. A study of the life of Miss Ellen Miller was presented by Miss Whiting, and a paper on the work of Edwin B. Smead was read by Lewis N. Smead. Mrs. Sheldon reported in detail on "The Sycamore, Elms and Maples of Old Deerfield".

At the town hall in Old Deerfield an ample and excellent supper was served by the women of Deerfield who, like their mothers, have contributed greatly to the success of these famous annual gatherings. The evening program of the





Memorial Association opened with songs by Deerfield Academy Glee Club, directed by Ralph H. Oatley. "The Providences of God, 78th Psalm", written by Naham Tate some quarter-thousand years ago, was sung; and during the evening songs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were heard. Two interesting historical papers were read: "Three Hundred Years in the Valley of the Pocumtuck" by Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen of Deerfield, and "The Undying Spirit of New England" by Edward E. Whiting of Newton, both writers of note.

### REPORT OF CURATOR

Five months of the curator's time the past year has been spent in preparing, proof-reading and indexing Vol. VII of the Proceedings of this Association. With the efficient aid of George A. Sheldon and Frances S. Drenning the work has been accomplished, and is herewith submitted. The volume covers nine years, 1921-1929 inclusive, and contains the results of valuable original research. There are 92 more pages in this volume than in Vol. VI. This necessitated the use of thinner and more expensive paper in order to preserve uniformity of size in the series. However, we are told this paper contains no sulphur, and, therefore, will remain white fifty years or more, certainly a desirable compensation.

Vol. VII has been sent to 26 historical societies with most of which we exchange publications, and to 12 libraries. These societies and libraries represent the following states: Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri and California. This statement proves there is a demand for knowledge of early New England life.

The normal number of visitors to Memorial Hall has been exceeded this year, the number reaching almost 9000; to be exact 8983. Only once before have we had such a large attendance. The visitors have registered from 41 states and many foreign countries, representing Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, South America, Central America, Hawaii, Philippine Islands and the Bermudas. We have welcomed visitors from Burma, Finland and Poland, which is unusual.

Twenty-six schools and colleges, five summer camps and eighteen organizations have enjoyed the Collection. Many of these have already been noticed in the columns of *The Gazette and Courier*.

We have received 150 contributions, consisting of 57 books and pamphlets, and 93 other articles. Prof. John Dickinson has presented the Association with an excellent photograph of Chief Justice John A. Aiken.





"The Field Portraits" which the Association has long hoped to possess came to us in November from Clifford K. Field of Guilford, Vt., through Mrs. Carrie L. Hamilton of Brattleboro. They are oil portraits of Maj. Elihu Field, born in Deerfield, 1753; Mrs. Thankful Taylor Doolittle Field, wife of Oliver Doolittle and David Field; Capt. Elihu Field, born 1781; Mrs. Pamela Burt Field, wife of Capt. Elihu. When warm weather returns we hope to have these portraits restored and placed on exhibition.

One of the most fascinating gifts has been a case of 30 book-marks, made from 1825 to 1875, collected by Miss Margaret C. Whiting and Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen, and contributed by Miss Whiting. Other gifts have been acknowledged in the columns of *The Gazette*.

A small, new case has been added to the Memorial Room, which contains most of our daguerreotypes.

The large number of books received from the Thacher Estate has been catalogued by the assistant, Miss Mellen. The excellent care of Memorial Hall by Miss Mellen has resulted in the hearty commendation of many visitors of 1929.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON.

Deerfield, Feb. 25, 1930.

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## NECROLOGY

### JOHN SHELDON

*By J. M. Arms Sheldon*

When a life, from youth to age, shuns publicity; when this life develops away from the lime light through sunny days and days of tragic sorrow to complete fulfillment, is not silence the perfect tribute? I ask the question and answer it, Yes, silence is the perfect tribute. When, however, this life has strengthened other lives, when it has cheered others by its innate sense of humor; when it has inspired others by its persistent courage, can those who have been helped remain silent? No, they cannot. Genuine appreciation and profound gratitude must find expression, however imperfect, however inadequate the tribute may be.





Born in the old, historic town of Deerfield, in the ancient house of the Sheldons, on February 13, 1848, John Sheldon was the sixth generation from Ensign John Sheldon, the permanent Deerfield settler of 1682. His father, George Sheldon, was the son of Seth Sheldon and Caroline Stebbins; she was the daughter of Colonel Joseph Stebbins, the Revolutionary Patriot.

The mother of John Sheldon was Susan Stewart Stearns, daughter of John Foster Stearns of Dummerston, Vermont.

The Sheldons for generations had been farmers, and most of John's childhood was passed on his father's farm. The life of a farm boy was described graphically by John's father, many years later, in an historical paper presented to this Association, entitled, "The Passing of the Stall-fed Ox and the Farm Boy."

John was a quiet, retiring child, full of originality and humor. He loved nature passionately, and it may be this love was inherited from his father, who often said that some of the most satisfying days of his life were spent with his children, John and Belle, strolling over the hills and through the woods of Old Deerfield.

John was educated at the town school and later in Deerfield Academy, graduating under Virgil M. Howard. Never robust in health, the farm did not appeal to him, so that, in 1867, he took a course at Burnham's Commercial College in Springfield, and on January 1, 1868, became a clerk in the hardware store of George A. Arms of Greenfield. Mercantile life was congenial, and years passed happily.

The crowning joy of John Sheldon's life came on October 24, 1871, when he married the daughter of Mr. Arms, Ellen Louisa Arms. Supremely happy in his home, with a wife who loved the home as the dearest spot on earth, with the advent of three children, two sons and a daughter, the husband and father felt that his lines had fallen in pleasant places. A companion of his children, he reveled in their growth and development. These years may be called the golden years of John Sheldon's life. For more than a quarter of a century this life flowed on serenely, then the shadow fell. In 1899 his daughter, Jennie Belle, and his son, John, Jr., died of the dread disease, typhoid. With marvelous courage the father faced the inevitable, going on with his work steadily and bravely.

About 1903 Mr. Sheldon retired from the hardware business, and became one of the busiest men in Greenfield, looking after property, erecting the "Sheldon Building," and carrying on, unobtrusively, the causes in which he believed. He was such a sound business man with keen insight into the secret motives of men, his advice was often sought by others in the commercial field.





A staunch Republican in politics, and a broad-minded Liberal in religious views, he possessed the happy faculty of seldom antagonizing his opponents. Many a time the writer has heard oil poured on troubled waters which became placid, the oil being, usually, a funny story, so apropos and so well told, it produced the desired result.

After forty-one years of happy married life the wife and mother, on New Year's Day, 1913, passed from the home she loved. Henceforth Mr. Sheldon made his home with his son George, who, as he often said, "has done everything in his power for my comfort."

In 1916 Mr. Sheldon's father died. It was the wish of the father that his son succeed him as President of this Association. Painfully conscious of his inability to fill his father's place historically, he, nevertheless, set himself with singleness of purpose to furthering the best interests of this Society. Its welfare was close to his heart, and the present excellent condition of the Institution owes much to his wise judgment and foresight.

At the annual meeting of this Association in 1908, Mr. Sheldon presented a paper on "The Common Field of Deerfield" which proved his ability for original research. In 1923 at the 250th anniversary of the incorporation of the town he wrote on "Telling what happened to Deerfield, February 29, 1704" — a clear, condensed statement of the tragedy. He was an easy and graphic writer, and his letters were rich mines of humor.

For many years Mr. Sheldon was Trustee of the Deerfield Academy, only resigning when increasing deafness made it a necessity.

Mr. Sheldon died May 14, 1929, eighty-one years young. Certainly such a life strengthens our faith in the integrity, the eternal loyalty, and the absolute genuineness of human nature, and as such, the life of John Sheldon is an inspiration to us all.

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## ELLEN MILLER

*By Margaret C. Whiting*

A year ago today there was read at the afternoon meeting of this Association a paper by Ellen Miller, written about her mother's recollections of Mary Lyon. It was the last bit of work she did, accomplished under great physical difficulties, an example of her unflinching fortitude and her strong interest in





this society. It gave her pleasure to realize she had something to contribute to the Association's records of the past, to commemorate a teacher and a pupil deserving of such remembrance. Now, since last June, she also has become but a memory to those whom she held in esteem. Very different from both that pupil and that teacher, she yet was very like them, for she had the same ideals of righteousness and generosity and loyalty that were the conspicuous foundation of her mother's character and of that of the preceptress of Mt. Holyoke college. Though her father, Sylvanus Miller, 2nd, was born and reared in New York City coming from an old Easthampton, Long Island family, his inheritance from the English stock was the same as that of her mother, Mary Esther Graves, whose people were among the first settlers of our neighbor, Hatfield. It was a good inheritance from clean living, straight thinking, honest dealing folk, who never bartered honor for a mess of pottage. There was a Revolutionary soldier, and an Indian fighter, Ben Wait, whose fame belongs to Deerfield's story, on one side, and, matching this on the other, a great-grandfather who was voted the title of "Patriot" by the New York Assembly for his services to the cause of Independence.

It was from her mother than Ellen Miller drew her distinguishing love of art, from her father came her wit and love of the apt word; from both she derived her liberality of thought in religion and politics. Bred to think for herself she was as free from dogmatism as she was from crude radicalism in her criticism of life, for she was a keen and courageous critic of all things. But it is as an artist she must be considered, for that predominating love of form and color and that persistent search for beauty which make the artist's dower, were her marked characteristics. From her babyhood the need of creating beauty possessed her, to that purpose all her effort was directed to the end of her life.

Ellen was the third child in her family, being born in 1854 in New Haven, Conn., where her father was building the new railroad that connected that city with New York. Later she lived in Alexandria, Va., in Flushing, L. I., and in Hatfield, finally coming with her parents and younger sister to Deerfield where she has spent the happier half of her life. There were the usual schooldays, a year in the Westfield Normal school for special study, winters in New York at the Academy of Design and the Art Students' League or in private studios, for visible education, though probably her home culture was of most benefit.

Always hampered by delicate health due to a serious accident in early childhood, Ellen's persistent energy and industry accomplished much. She taught French in a boarding school





in Pennsylvania, she worked in teaching educational art for five or six consecutive years in Boston and she was art supervisor in the public schools of the two Warrens in this state for a couple of years. As an alleviation to whatever of drudgery belonged to these tasks, Ellen in her holidays, turned to the Vermont hills with certainty of their help, for the loveliness of nature did much to minister to her spirit. She had also the pleasures of a long summer in the heart of the Adirondacks, a winter in California, and a happy half year in England. All these were the valued opportunities for furthering her study of art, which was ever the preoccupation of her thought. To its service she gave all the leisure and strength unused by the tasks she performed. In this way she produced, with a friend, half the 300 drawings and descriptive text for a book called "The Wildflowers of the Northeastern States," she painted pictures, exhibited and sold them, and during the last part of her life, became proficient in the chemistry of dyeing with natural dye-stuffs. This interest was induced by the craft she helped form and carried on for nearly twenty-five years, which became well known as The Deerfield Society of Blue and White Needlework. To properly fulfill the purpose of this craft, which was a revival of the almost forgotten tradition of colonial embroidery, it was necessary to produce many colored threads and fabrics, and the success of the undertaking was largely due to the beautiful and permanent dyes Ellen Miller learned to produce. No one without the rare capacity for scientific study and the still rarer sense of true color could have become, as she did, the chief expert in this country in the use of dyestuffs derived from natural, rather than chemical sources. Always professional in what she undertook, dyeing was but a part of the labor she performed in carrying on the craft, in making countless designs, overseeing their production and taking her full share in the business management it entailed.

Amidst these occupations Ellen found refreshment in the lovely landscape of the Deerfield valley, as long as she was able to reach its wide meadows and wooded slopes. In the village life, too, she found much to enjoy. For her friends and neighbors she had an abiding interest and loyal regard. To every good cause she gave a generous support, for it was not only the beauty of the eye she sought. Her ideals of harmony embraced life in all its aspects and if, in consequence, she cordially hated and repudiated cruelty and greed, she also was quick to recognize and love goodness in all places. Asking no personal return she gave largely and freely to all that measured to her scrupulous standards. Thorough in everything, whether weeding a flower bed, arranging a bouquet, or sweeping the hearth, Ellen gave her concentrated attention to the matter in hand, and so, urging her





physical strength to its limit, she was often obliged to forego pleasures, to often withdraw entirely from social enjoyments. This continual strife between her body and her dauntless spirit made her difficult for easy acquaintance, and being sensitive to every approach, as artists always are, she dwelt much alone. No one but a fellow artist could appreciate this natural reticence, and her life is most fittingly summed in the words written by her lifelong friend, the portrait painter, Edwin B. Child, when he said in a private letter at the time of her death:

“Ellen’s life has held much meaning for me and it is a beautiful friendship ended. I cared very much for her, her wonderful mind with its rich wisdom, and quaint and fascinating humor, the beauty of her talent and her indomitable spirit. While I never felt exactly intimate with her it was because she lived much by herself in her own world, a bit remote. But she showed it to us,—glimpses,—and it was a world of rare spiritual beauty and I think she had great joy in it. She surely gave much.”

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## THE SYCAMORE, ELMS AND MAPLES OF OLD DEERFIELD

*By J. M. Arms Sheldon*

Deerfield was blest! Three hundred, it may be four hundred years ago, Deerfield, then Pocumtuck, was blest with a rich and wondrous soil, with plenty of sunshine, and plenty of rain. What more could a tree desire! Little seeds, one, it may be, of a sycamore, or as we love to call it, a Pocumtuck Buttonball, and other seeds of the elm sprouted in this fertile earth, and climbed upward from a world of darkness into a world of light. The baby trees were supremely well nourished, therefore they grew—quietly, persistently.

Red Men and White Men came; they fought one another and passed away. Then White Men came and stayed, still the trees grew—silently, persistently. Nobody wanted to chop them down, they just reveled in what is called today “a favorable environment.”

Generations of men were born and generations died, until, at last, the trees were big and strong. Fifty-seven years ago, in 1873, George Sheldon, a lover of trees, measured five of these





elms. They were then known as the "Aunt Hannah Williams elm," later the "Champney elm," the "Dr. Willard elm," close companion of the Manse, the "George Sheldon elm," just in front of the old Sheldon house, the "David Hoyt elm," in front of the Virgil M. Howard (J. Hochrine) place, and the "Old Indian House Tree," facing the "Old Indian House." These trees were measured 1 ft., 4 ft., 7 ft. from the ground, and the results recorded as follows:—

- "1. Aunt Hannah Williams, 26 — 19 —  $20\frac{1}{4}$ .
2. Dr. Willard, 27 —  $18\frac{1}{2}$  — 19.
3. George Sheldon,  $22\frac{1}{2}$  —  $15\frac{1}{2}$  —  $13\frac{1}{2}$ .
4. David Hoyt (north one),  $20\frac{1}{4}$  —  $14\frac{1}{4}$  —  $13\frac{1}{2}$ .
5. Old Indian House, 21 —  $15\frac{1}{2}$  —  $16\frac{1}{2}$ ."

In 1890 Mr. Sheldon measured three of these trees again with this result:—

- "3. 23 — 16 — 15.3.
4.  $22\frac{1}{2}$  — 15.8 — 15.2.
5. 21.5 — 17.2 — 18."

These elms lived in an age of ignorance concerning trees. Modern methods of tree surgery were unknown. It was a time when the majority of people held fast to the belief that trees and men had their appointed time to die. Accordingly when disease appeared the tree was allowed to drop its branches one by one, and finally expire. Today all these five elms are dead, the "Giant Champney elm," in passing, leaving twenty-eight cords of wood.

This year, 1890, Mr. Sheldon measured also many trees on the "Street," including maples with elms. In accordance with his usual painstaking method the results were recorded. I give his statement in full although several of the trees have disappeared.

"All the trees noted below were measured by me in October 1890, five feet from the ground.

*Elms.* Elms in front of Charles Jones [F. Reitzell] lot set out by Ralph Williams and George Dickinson, Jr., 1841, north to south, 4.5 — 6.4 — 6.4 — 4.8.

Elms in front of A. W. Ball, set out 1848, n. to s., 5.3 — 7.8 — 5.8.

Elms in front of the Nims lot, n. to s., 10 — 10.5 — 8.6 — 8.7.



Elms in front of Frary House, n. to s., 10.6 — 10.8 [dead] — 8.6.

Elms in front of Chapin [Academy] house, 8 — 9½.

Elms in front of David Sheldon's [Mrs. M. A. V. Childs] lot, n. to s., 8.8 — 6.10 — 12.4. Age unknown.

Elm in front of Unitarian parsonage set out by E. Amidon, 1862, 4.9.

Elms in Memorial Hall grounds, set out 1802 or 4.

Southeast 9.9. Middleeast 10. Northeast 7.9.

Northwest 13.6. Middlewest 9. Southwest 9.2.

*Maples.* At north end.

Two north of E. Amidon's house, set out by him in 1869 when he moved the Stebbins barn to his lot. West one 3.11, east 3.10½.

Maple he set at the same time near guide board in heater piece, in place of one cut down in moving the barn, 3.5.

Maples in front of E. Amidon's house set 1809, going south 7.10 — 7.11.

Maples against my lot, east one 8.2, west 8.11.

Maples in front of Samuel Wells [Academy] lot, n. to s., 7.4 — 7.6½ — 9.7 — 10.2½.

Maples in front of Wilson [Whitman] lot, 1802, n. to s., 8.8 — 8.6 — 9.3 — 8, first about on north line or over.

Maples in front of Fogg [W. J. Manning] lot, 1809, n. to s., 8.10 — 9 — 7.4½ — 9.5½ — 9.11.

Maples in front of the Smead [Mrs. Lewis] lot, 1809, n. to s., 6.4 — 6.5 — 8.6.

Maples in front of Willard House, set by Dr. Willard and others, 1809, n. to s., 7.4 — 7.6½ — 7.4 — 6.10½.

Maples in front of Dennis Stebbins [E. and L. Abercrombie] lot, 1825, n. to s., 6.10 — 6.2 — 5.1 — 5.6.

Around the corner at the north end of the "Street," beginning at the east end,

Maples. 5.8 — 6 — 4.3 — 6.3 — 6.4 — 5.3 — 5.4½ — 5.9 — 6.1 — 5.4 — 5.8 — 4.10.

Round the corner going south, 6.3 — 4.4 — 6.5. The last one near E. Cowles north line set out 1840 by E. W. Stebbins."

In 1901 a large limb on the huge elm in front of the Billings homestead fell to the ground in the night time rousing the people from their slumbers. The next year, 1902, the tree was cut







down revealing an absolutely sound trunk. Dr. George E. Stone of Amherst, an authority on tree culture, counted the rings, and found 327. If one ring was made every year then this elm was born in 1575.

The work of Mr. Sheldon in 1873 and 1890 suggested the work of 1929 which has resulted in the "Map of the Shade Trees of Old Deerfield", hanging on the wall; in this "Tree Census"; and this rare and beautiful booklet — a complete surprise. This difficult task has been accomplished under the direction of A. W. Dodge, Jr., of the F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company of Connecticut, with the help of Dr. E. Porter Felt, one of the leading scientific men in tree diseases in the country, and at present Director and Chief Entomologist of the Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories. These scientists, and the two efficient assistants, Alexander R. Chamberlain and Herbert I. Harris, are deserving most hearty praise.

The map covers not only Old Deerfield "Street", but also "Memorial Lane" and the "Old Albany Road." It gives the approximate location of 575 trees. The historic houses are distinguished from the others by a double black line, and the ancient trees by a larger, circular black spot. The ages of the houses, and certain outstanding facts in regard to their history are told so far as known. A photo-stat print was taken of the map, divided into sections, and placed in the Tree Census so that one may sit at his desk and study with comfort the various tree problems. The numbers in the Tree Census correspond, of course, with those of the map. The girth or circumference of the trees, breast high, is given, and, in many cases, their present condition, whether healthy or diseased.

In addition to this work we are fortunate in having the detailed record of Dr. Felt containing the measurements of many trees taken 1 ft., 4 ft. and 7 ft. from the ground. In the hands of a specialist a comparative study of this record with that of Mr. Sheldon, made nearly forty years ago, will throw light on the laws governing the growth and development of Massachusetts trees.

Dr. Felt's record.

"The following all relate to Old Deerfield trees.

The Hitchcock elm. This appears in the Hall of Fame of the American Forestry Association and in Simonds, Historic Trees of Massachusetts.

The over all measurement at 7' from the ground is 20'1"; at 4' above the ground, 20'3"; the bark measurement, 24'8". The over all measurement 1' above the ground is 29'8". The tree was cabled in 1920. There are many decayed areas which should be repaired. A tree of such inestimable value as this should be taken over as a town charge and kept in repair.





The large sycamore on the Common has the following over all dimensions.

At 7' — 18'7"

At 4' — 18'2"

At 1' — 22'8"

The over all dimensions of the small sycamore on the Common are as follows.

At 7' — 11'5"

At 4' — 12'1½"

At 1' — 16'5"

The sugar maple at the south end of the street, the one in the triangle, has the following over all dimensions.

At 7' — 11'4"

At 4' — 11'1"

At 1' — 15'11"

The Memorial Hall elms have the following over all dimensions.

Northeast tree. At 7' — 11'3"

At 4' — 11'3½"

At 1' — 14'7"

Southeast tree. At 7' — 10'10"

At 4' — 11'4"

At 1' — 14'3"

Southwest tree. At 7' — 9'10"

At 4' — 10'1½"

At 1' — 11'3½"

Northwest tree. At 7' — 10'7¼"

At 4' — 11'1"

At 1' — 14'9½"

The large maple at Memorial Hall has the following over all dimensions.

At 7' — 10'2½"

At 4' — 10'4"

At 1' — 14'9"

The trees in front of the Manse or Willard House have the following over all dimensions beginning with the southernmost tree and proceeding north.

Southernmost tree. At 4' — 8'10"

At 1' — 11'6"

The next tree north At 4' — 8'7"

At 1' — 10'7"

The next tree north At 4' — 8'10½"

At 1' — 9'10"

The northernmost tree At 4' — 8'9"

At 1' — 10'4"

Mrs. George Sheldon's elm, located in the yard beside the house. The over all dimensions are as follows.





At 7' — 13'9"

At 4' — 14'6½"

At 1' — 21'4"

The bark measurements are as follows.

At 4' — 16'4"

At 1' — 28'2"

The height of this tree is 112 feet. The spread is 95 feet. This is certainly a magnificent tree and one may well take pride in its possession.

The maple in front of Mrs. George Sheldon's and east of the walk has over all dimensions as follows.

At 7' — 10'2"

At 4' — 10'7"

At 1' — 13'4"

The elm to the east of the walk and in front of Mrs. Sheldon's has the following over all dimensions.

At 7' — 10'11"

At 4' — 11'7"

At 1' — 19'3"

The Dennis Stebbins elm. The over all dimensions are as follows.

At 7' — 17'4"

At 4' — 17'10"

At 1' — 23'5"

The bark measurements at 4' are 18'10".

The soil should be dug away on the northeast and eastern side of the tree to ascertain if there is a root infection, and if this proves to be the case, the roots should be treated and in any event, the old soil should be replaced with fresh earth.

The Wright elm, the last tree on the east side of the street and at the north end of the village. The following are the over all dimensions.

At 7' — 17'3½"

At 4' — 17'5½"

At 1' — 24'9"

This tree has a spread of 130 feet 8 inches. This has the largest spread which Mr. Dodge has ever measured. This tree is noticed in Simonds, *Historic Trees of Massachusetts*.

The maple at the north end of the village street and located nearly in the middle of the street, were it continued. The over all dimensions are as follows.

At 7' — 10'6"

At 4' — 10'7"

At 1' — 12'5"

The elm in front of the Unitarian Parsonage and recorded as having been planted in 1862. The following are the over all measurements.





At 7' — 8'2½''

At 4' — 8'4''

At 1' — 11'6½''

The elms in front of the Frary House. The following are the over all measurements.

The north elm. At 7' — 12'1''

At 4' — 12'10''

At 1' — 15'10''

The south elm. At 7' — 9'4''

At 4' — 9'6''

At 1' — 12'

There is evidence of fungus infection at the roots. There were originally three trees. The middle one was removed some years ago and a small one is now growing.

The maples in front of the Whitman House. The following are the over all dimensions, beginning with the southernmost and working northward.

Southernmost maple. At 7' — 8'11''

At 4' — 8'11½''

At 1' — 10'6''

The next maple north. At 7' — 10'1''

At 4' — 10'

At 1' — 11'11''

The next maple north. At 7' — 9'3''

At 4' — 9'4''

At 1' — 11'5''

Northernmost maple At 7' — 10'9''

At 4' — 10'5''

At 1' — 13'8''

Deerfield is certainly most fortunate in the possession of such magnificent trees with at least three of great historic interest. I most firmly believe in the preservation of these priceless treasures and it gives me great pleasure to know what is being done and what is contemplated for the future. I believe that records such as Mr. Sheldon made and those which we made Saturday last should be continued not only in Deerfield but in other communities, if for no other reason than to show the growth and development of the trees and the possibilities in protecting these natural ornaments. I wish that every village would undertake a tree census so that all might know a little as to the actual condition of the trees in the community. This should be followed by records of the subsequent treatment of trees, their removal, etc. in order that there may be at hand a reasonably comprehensive history of each tree. These records





would increase greatly in value as time passes. Deerfield has certainly made a most gratifying start in this direction.

BARTLETT TREE RESEARCH LABORATORIES,  
E. P. FELT."

Mr. Dodge, in his "Forward" in the "Tree Census," says,—  
"Should the town, at any time in the near future, give these trees a systematic care as their value to the town warrants, this book [the "Tree Census"] may be used for preparing estimates and planning work. We sincerely trust that it will be kept up to date, and that further data may be entered from year to year so that at any time in the future accurate information may be obtained concerning the planting, growth or removal of any tree of Old Deerfield."

In conclusion. It is interesting to note that our oldest trees by the "Tree Census" are the Hitchcock elm with a girth, breast high, of 20 ft. 1 in.; the Pocumtuck Buttonball, 18 ft. girth; the Dennis Stebbins or Abercrombie elm, 18 ft. girth; the Asa Stebbins or Wright street elm, 17 ft. 5 in. girth with a spread of 130 ft. 8 in.; the Catlin or Cyrus Brown elm, 17 ft. 4 in. girth with a spread of 125 ft.; the Luke Wright or Lamb elm with a girth of 16 ft. 6 in., and a spread of about 100 ft.

One of the tallest trees in all this region is on the Colonel Joseph Stebbins homestead. It is only 125 years old but, according to Dr. Felt, it has a girth, 4 ft. from the ground, of 14 ft. 6½ in., a spread of 95 ft. and rises to the height of 112 ft.

Fortunately, we have come to a time when many people hold fast to the truth that trees and men do not have their appointed time to die. These people know that increase of knowledge and skilful treatment may prolong the lives of both trees and men many years. What we need most today is to be roused to action,—to be filled with that vital enthusiasm which passes not away but lives on till the goal is reached. It is devoutly to be wished that this map, census, exquisite booklet and detailed report may create and stimulate greater interest in our grand, inspiring trees, which will, in turn, result in their future preservation. If this object is accomplished then the mission of these gifts to the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association will be fulfilled.



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# ANNUAL MEETING—1931

## REPORT

The last Tuesday of February — anniversary of the Massacre in 1704 — fell on the 24th, and the Memorial Association met in Old Deerfield and held its 61st annual meeting, reelecting its *officers* and adding to the council Frances N. S. Allen, John M. Hackley and Elizabeth H. Wells, to fill vacancies caused by the deaths of Mrs. Sarah A. Pratt, Mary P. Wells Smith and Arthur H. Tucker.

Mrs. Sheldon presided, and her report as curator announced some notable additions to the Sheldon Collection and that over 10,000 persons had visited it during the past year. That report, tributes to the three members of the council who have passed on, and four historical papers are printed on the following pages.

The evening session, preceded by the sumptuous old-fashioned supper, was held in the Town Hall, better to accommodate the large audience that gathered to hear the papers and the delightful singing of the Deerfield Academy glee club. The programs of the two gatherings are discussed in the daily papers of the vicinity, but the other and even more significant part of the affair, the audience of the evening, is worth a very special mention of its own.

For you could go long and far before you could find a gathering more distinctively American in the very best sense of the word, than that of Tuesday evening. It was America at its very best, America as we like best to think of it, America as George Washington would have liked to see it. On the stage and down among the benches sat direct descendants, indeed, of many of those who lived before Washington, as well as of those who were his contemporaries and who fought with him in the Revolution.

And among those on the benches were, as well, rising men with their families, whose naturalization papers are yet hardly dry, as well as those of foreign strain who through several generations have proved themselves a fine type of American. There were also foreigners of distinguished birth, who, after traveling the round world over and seeing life under its varied and romantic, as well as its practical aspects, have yet chosen





America—and Deerfield—for the reason that they get more that is worth having out of life on this side of the water and in this old town, than anywhere else. Such were the audience in the benches.

But behind the benches, perched on the piled up supper tables, sat an even more significant group of listeners, who were as well entertainers. They were the Deerfield Academy glee club, whose delightful singing interspersed between the papers, added the final distinction to the evening. For the papers read, all had to do with the past; two of them revivals of the life long vanished, brilliant characterizations of types that are no more; but the songs were the songs of the future, sung by the youth that is to make that future.

Such a gathering as that in Deerfield is a lesson in the finest patriotism. Well would it be for the country if all communities treasured so consistently their history and made it so living a part of the promise of their future.

The foregoing paragraphs are quoted from an article by Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen published in the Holyoke Daily Transcript and Telegram.

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## REPORT OF CURATOR

The dream of a quarter-century has been realized in 1930. Ten thousand—to be exact, 10,250—persons have visited Memorial Hall this year. Could the founder of this Association have known that in the Tercentenary year of this Old Bay State, ten thousand people would enjoy the collection, which he, very largely, gathered together, he certainly would have been serenely happy, and have felt doubly repaid for his long years of arduous and loving research work.

For seventeen years the number 10,000 has been the goal of the curator, and the assistant, Miss Mellen, who today have that quieting sense of satisfaction which is always felt when a goal is reached.

The visitors have registered from 46 states (all except Kansas and Arkansas), from the territory of Alaska and 19 foreign countries. Among the latter are: Norway, India, China, Australia, South Africa and the Philippine Islands; 29 schools and 17 organizations have visited the hall. These have been noticed already in the columns of the Gazette and Courier.

The two most important events of the year are the restoration of the four Field portraits, given last year by Clifford K. Field of Guilford, Vt., and the gift of the collection of Eugene K. Arms of South Deerfield.





The oil portraits have been skilfully restored by Miss Elizabeth B. Fuller and are now hanging in the Colonial and Revolutionary room. On the north wall is the portrait of Thankful Taylor, daughter of Thomas Taylor of Deerfield. She was born in 1716, and she married for her second husband, David Field. On the south wall is the portrait of her son, Major Elihu Field, born in Deerfield in 1753, and her grandson, Captain Elihu Field, born 1781, with his wife, Pamela Burt, born 1783. These portraits are valuable contributions to our eighteenth century collection.

The other notable gift is the collection of Indian relics from Mr. Arms. It consists of several hundred specimens, mostly found in this region, and bears testimony to the value of the habit of collecting through many years. There are about 200 arrowheads and spearheads varying in size and material. Though most are made of chert, or flint as it is usually called, there are tiny arrowheads that appear to be fashioned out of translucent quartz crystals; these are certainly objects of beauty. Besides the local collection there are 28 rare arrowheads from Lakeland, Fla., preserved by framing under glass.

In this collection there are celts, stone axes, gouges and pestles. One of these pestles was found by Charles H. Dean on the George E. Arms farm near Sugar Loaf Mountain. It was about five feet below the top of the bank. There are two iron axes, one of which looks as if it had lain in water a long time. Among the relics is a box containing over a hundred flint flakes and broken arrowheads from one Indian camp. Another box is full of fragments of soapstone pottery.

Handwrought nails, pieces of wood and fragments of rock were brought home from Fort Chambly in Canada, a Fort familiar to the Deerfield captives.

This gift also includes a flint-lock gun which did service in the French and Indian wars, and a large chest that belonged to Elijah Arms, born 1724.

The curator has spent much time on this collection which is now exhibited in the Indian room.

Other contributions this year have been nearly 100 Civil war relics from George E. Arms of Lakeland, Fla.; 40 books and pamphlets, 169 manuscripts and 25 miscellaneous articles.

Recently a gift has been received from F. H. Englehard of Springfield of peculiar interest. It appears to be a carved stone pipe of large proportions. It was found among the Indian relics of Wellington M. Stebbins of South Deerfield, and was thought to have been dug up near Sugar Loaf Mountain. If this supposition is correct then the relic is different from anything found heretofore in this locality. More information is needed on the subject.





The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has given us "Pathways of the Puritans" and "Historical Markers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony," both significant reminders of the Tercentenary. "Pathways of the Puritans" is an admirable work for reading and reference. It is beautifully illustrated by many of the seventeenth century houses of the state. We are indeed fortunate in its possession.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON.

Deerfield, Feb. 24, 1931.

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## NECROLOGY

### MARY P. WELLS SMITH

*By Rev. Margaret B. Barnard*

Mary P. Wells Smith's father, Doctor Noah S. Wells, was one of the Wells family of Greenfield and Shelburne; and her mother, Esther Nims Coleman, was the sister of the Elijah Coleman who endowed the Prospect Hill School. However, in spite of this background her father moved to Attica, New York, shortly after his marriage, and it was there that Mary Prudence was born July 23, 1840. Fortunately for Mary and her future the family did not remain many years in Attica, and in her ninth year, Doctor and Mrs. Wells returned to Greenfield, settling in what is now known as Greenfield Meadows. Her education was an excellent one for her time, and after graduating from the Greenfield High School in 1858, she attended Miss Draper's Seminary in Hartford. It is well for us all to recall that in 1858 no college for women existed, except Oberlin, and that for many years it was not considered quite the proper thing for girls to go to college.

On her return home from Hartford, she taught for a time in the Greenfield High School, and one of her pupils has spoken of her fine presence and very attractive personality as she initiated her class into the mysteries of drawing. For a year she taught in a private school in Wilmington, Delaware, but her health gave out, and, on returning to Greenfield, she accepted a position as assistant in the Franklin Savings Institution. She was the first woman to be thus employed in Massachusetts, and for eight years she held the position to the great satisfaction of all concerned. Then, seeing that she was receiving much less pay than the men who were doing the same tasks, she made her demand for "equal pay for equal work". This





petition was not granted, although her salary was raised, and she resigned.

During the years of teaching and of service in the bank, she was also feeling her way into authorship. She wrote a number of articles under the pen name of P. Thorne, but the first to be published was entitled "The Trials of a Tall Young Lady", and appeared in the *Springfield Republican*. Other articles followed in various journals, and in 1874 a serial story for children appeared in the *Christian Union*. This was soon published in book form as *Jolly Good Times*, and was the first of a series about child life on a farm, which speedily became so popular. That popularity has never waned, and fifty-three years after the first edition was published, when the author was eighty-seven years old, her publishers brought out a new edition finely illustrated.

In 1875 she married Judge Fayette Smith, son of the Reverend Preserved Smith who lived in Deerfield from 1850 to 1862. Mrs. Smith and her husband remained in Cincinnati, Ohio, for twenty-one years during which time she was very active in the Katharine T. Thayer Alliance (Unitarian), the Post Office Mission, and the Cincinnati Woman's Club.

When Judge Smith retired from the bench in 1895, it seemed best to return to the East, and as Mrs. John F. Moors, a sister of the Judge, had just died, he bought her home, and he and his wife moved into the large old-fashioned house on High Street in Greenfield. Judge Smith died in 1903, and from that time Mrs. Smith devoted herself to writing and to public affairs.

Before her marriage she had been for a short time a member of the Greenfield School Committee, being the first woman to be elected to the School Board in that town. Now for six years, from 1907 to 1912, she served continuously in that capacity, paving the way for the work of the many other able women who succeeded her.

Her active work in the Unitarian Church began before the death of her husband. She served for many years as president of the Woman's Alliance of All Souls' Church, was president of the Connecticut Valley Associate Alliance, and was appointed director of the General Alliance for western Massachusetts. Through her influence, the Woman's Club, the Garden Club, the Drama Club, and the Poetry Club were organized. She was also an active member of the local Suffrage League.

While still organizing these clubs, Mrs. Smith began an agitation for a historical society. Her great interest in Deerfield and the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association made her feel that a similar organization should exist in her own town. Very few saw this need, and for many years, little or no interest was manifested in it. Finally in 1907 the society was organized





with Judge Aiken as its president. She, however, was its leader and inspirer, and after the first year, its president until her death.

During all these years of almost ceaseless activity, with many interruptions from callers, and those who came to see the author of the books they loved, she was writing the series of historical sketches centering around Hadley and Old Deerfield. All of these books were most carefully written, with painstaking accuracy in every detail. She spent weeks searching the records of towns up and down the Connecticut Valley. She read everything which had the least bearing on the historical aspect of the story she was telling. She made a careful study of Indian life and character. When possible, she visited the localities she wished to describe so that the story might be accurate in what we call local color. When she was writing *The Boys of the Border*, she went to Charlemont and asked an innkeeper to drive her up the old Cold River road, now part of the Mohawk Trail, but then an abandoned road. The man took an open wagon, and into it he put a gun, a rope, and an axe. Mrs. Smith, somewhat puzzled and alarmed, asked the meaning of these warlike preparations, and the driver informed her that the axe would be useful if they ran across a fallen tree, the gun if they met a bear, and the rope if the wagon broke down!

She had many trials, many great sorrows, and there were very keen disappointments. Yet through them all, she kept her faith in God and humanity, and her optimism was a deep well from which she drew draughts of living water. One night as she and the writer sat together by the fireplace in her pleasant livingroom, she said, "I have had a beautiful life. I have found so much joy in it, so many friends, so many lovely things. There have been sorrows,—those come into every life, but I have seen so much and have been privileged to help a little by my books and my work." This was said when she was seventy-nine years old, and when the shadow of blindness was already upon her.

Eleven years later, in the early morning of December 17, 1930, her fine spirit went forth as a pioneer to seek the great adventure of life. There we can only think of her as rejoicing in a happy reunion with the loved ones, her active spirit finding new and larger avenues of service.





## SPINSTERS OF YESTERDAY

*By Margaret Miller*

There is nothing like a comparison with the past to show us just where we stand to-day, and whether we are progressing intellectually as well as materially. I have been interested in the spinsters of yesterday, their social position and their attitude toward life. They deserve a little more attention than they have received from the historian, and I propose to devote a half-hour or so to these neglected ladies.

Education for females in New England after the Revolution was confined to the simplest matters. The dame schools, which were only in session during the pleasanter parts of the year "when the walking was good," included reading, writing, a little — a very little — arithmetic and geography, possibly a course of painting in water color, and needlework. Perhaps the samplers which resulted were the most important part of the curriculum. But this was sufficient for the woman who was called to be the head of a family and feed, clothe, and bring up a dozen children more or less. Those women who were not so fortunate as to get married, those "unappropriated blessings" the old maids, did not fare so well. In my researches into the history of my native town of Hatfield I have come across a number of these ladies, and I am going to tell you about some of them and how they occupied themselves.

On the main street of the village, 150 years ago, there was a shabby old red house abreast of the meeting-house, which stood in the middle of the road. Here lived alone, after her mother's death, Aunt Beck Dickinson, a gownmaker by trade and an "od old being" by her own description. For years she kept a diary, which seems to have been not only her recreation but her clearing house in which she sought relief from all her troubles. Her spelling was poor, punctuation there was none, and her capitals were scattered freely with no regard to rhyme or reason. But this was due to her lack of training. Her ideas were forcibly expressed, and had she lived a hundred years later she might have been an essayist or a college president. Unfortunately for us, she saw fit to destroy much of her earlier work — which would have told us of Revolutionary days — because, as she says, it was "Wrote and Spelt so Poorly that it works me to See them." All that remains in one volume of foolscap bound in the blue paper in which sugar loaves were wrapt, and dating from 1787, when she was forty-nine, to 1795.

At first glance it would seem to be a collection of sermons on sermons — abstracts of Dr. Lyman's homilies written on Sunday





afternoons; but amongst these pious meditations we find many bits of gossip, and become conscious of a constant struggle of the Puritan heart between a love of the things of this world — her carnal nature, she would call it — and the higher spiritual plane to which she aspired. Here is an entry in illustration:

“this is Sunday august 5 day 1787 this morning here alone in the old house there is the wisdom of god and the Power of god and the goodness of god to be Seen in all this life what Should j doe was it not for this old hous it is a Safe Retreat from troble . . . . . there is a great many family blessings which j know nothing of but the gifts of time alwais bring Sorrow along with them a numerous family and a great Estate bring a great Concern upon the minds of the owners more than a Ballance for all the Comfort that tha bring.”

Later she adds:

“this morning awaked lonesome but with this thought that it was all the relation that j had the Soul and the body are closely joined and are the neerest relitives of any too in this life there is no other that will abide let my Soul know god who has joined this Soul and body in so neer a relation to each other how the Person lives who lives alone no Company in the dark and Silient Shades when all is thick darness around no one to Speak to how it fel to my Share to be here alone god only knows there is no Person in the world who loves Company more than me but it is gods will or im quite undon.”

Her visits to Sister Billings, whose husband kept the tavern a little farther down the street, seemed to reduce her spirits to the lowest depths.

“j came home from Sister bilings jest before the Sun went down Came into this lonely habitation where there is no voice nor nothing but one od being which Cannot find no rest for the Soul of her foot it is well that thos dark hours dont Come every day three Evenings in twelve weeks j have had those lonesome death like thoughts.”

Another entry says:

“yesterday was at Sister bilings . . . Came to this hous about half after Seven and found it dark and lonesome here j walked the rome and Cryed my Self Sick and found my heart very Stubborn against the government of god.”

And again:

“this morning was more lonesome than a Cat how wee are made for Society the minds of men are to commune with each other tha are to talk and walk together but mine has





fell by myself for some jniquity which has been found in me."

But a little later, the pendulum swinging the other way, she assures herself that "the hous is a gift a most Safe and happy retreat from the noise of the town."

The secret of her great discontent, her real unhappiness, was the disgrace of being called an old maid.

"j looked round me this afternoon to see those who was looking on me as a guilty being one who had not forgave my Enimies god knows how far j have Sinned in wishing Evil to there Souls this have j said that the Prosperity of my greatest Enemy Could doe me no harm but god only knows my heart and has Seen the Secret enmity that is loged there how tha have hised and waged the heads at me by reason of my Solotary life wondering how j Could Spend my time here alone in this hous it is indeed a mistry to me but the only Place to make me humble."

And all this misery in face of the fact, which she refers to more than once, that she had had "chances" — two at least being spoken of.

"my lot is of my own Chusing and of my own Contriving and how Could j help the matter it is ordered of god as well as Contrived by myself."

She cannot understand how anyone can be an old maid and bear up under the affliction. She remarks,

"this week back brought good Company into this town Mr. b--l-- with his wife with rachel l--there Sister an old maid who is forty seven years old but does not know how old she is."

The winter of '87-'88 was a hard one for Aunt Beck. It was extremely cold, she was ill so much that she could not follow her trade of gownmaking, and the old house "leaked like a sieve." Many times she complains that "every way has been Contrived by me which my imagination Could think on to Set myself in another Place." "in a Pusseling fit broke my Spectacles a great loss to me for tha Suted me So well that a guinny Should not have bought them out of my hand." So all winter long she worried and schemed and in the spring began to formulate her plans.

"23 of March 1788 Mr. Lyman has gave us two good Sermons Enough to have quieted my Crasi mind who have Spent this day Contriving Some way to dispose of my Self but have secretly sworn not to live here in this hous alone but where to goe and what to doe with my Self j know not — not to know where one is a going to be is Sad indeed every hour that j am awake am Packing up my things."





Then Sister Mather who lived far, far away in Bennington, Vermont, invited her to come and make her home with her. Can we imagine the upheaval of poor Aunt Beck's mind as she contemplated this alarming possibility!

"mr Lyman has given us too good Sermons in the forenoon j lost all the good words by Packing up my things So wicked j bee lost all the forenoon exercises by the tumult of my mind how Composed j be to whatsoever Comes."

But brother-in-law Mather being ill, the trip to Bennington was postponed, and that was such a relief that it almost made her contented with her lot. However, in August her poor old house came very near being the death of her. She writes,

"this is the 24 of August 1788 the last week a tusday the 19 instant there was a great Storm of wind it began South very hard blew for too hours which time j sat in this hous alone thought with my Self that j Could not have no idea of it unless j looked out of doors j was Surprised to See the Steepel of the meeting hous which Shook with the wind which was now a herricane by the Change from South to South west j dare not go back into the old hous and gave one look more at the Steepel and saw the rouff of this old hous begin to arise and before j Could think was buried under the ruins of the rouff which was Scattered abroad Six rod Some loged on a barn which was hard by my breath was gone but after was raised to life Crept out from under the rubish and Crept to the back door and gained my feet Came into this empty hous but dare not Stop a moment lest j Should die here alone j thought that j was very Soon to taste of death my neibour dolly morton See me Creep into the hous and was here in a moment She Called my brother who was at home the doctor was Called and j was let blood which was of Servis to me it being So Soon in fifteen minits j believe and j was Caryed to my brothers north roome there to give thanks to god for the wonderful Preservation of my life but j must drop my Pen j am so indisposed j was very sick for three days j could hardly turn me in the bed but was alive and that was more than j deserved."

After this remarkable recovery from the tempest *and* the bloodletting the subject of an expedition to Bennington was once more revived. On the 10th of September she and Sister Billings and her little nephew Joseph Billings set out on the momentous journey. Their means of locomotion is not stated, but it was undoubtedly by a horse and buggy. They went by way of Pittsfield, where they stopped for a day to visit old





acquaintances. At Bennington all her old fears beset her. She is sure that everyone is pointing the finger of scorn at her.

“how Sad the Sight to see a woman Singel above fifty and not merried Something is the matter She is Come for a husband haveing no luck in her own land but why doe those foolish thoughts Come dont happyness lie wholly in the mind?”

Yes, perhaps, but she spent days and nights in tears, her hope of heaven was “lost in grief” and she was called “an od being as ever lived” by her two sisters. So instead of remaining for a long visit with Sister Mather she returned to Hatfield with Sister Billings. After that she was invited to make her home with Sister B. and I am pleased to relate that some peace and comfort came to her in her declining years. Her nephews and nieces were all “Pleasant Plants,” and she loves to tell of the doings of a country tavern — the quiltings, the weddings, and the fall training. So this picture has a more serene ending, and yet it has a tragic aspect. I have given these quotations at some length in order that we may get an idea at first-hand of the then prevailing attitude toward spinsterhood. And it certainly was a narrow and unattractive sphere. There were so few things a single woman could do. She could keep a dame school so be she had had any education whatever, she could sew for a living, or she could be an unpaid drudge in a married brother’s or sister’s family, thankful that she could thereby earn her victuals and a place to sleep. In the old meeting-house there was a pew built up over the stairs in the gallery that was called the Old Maids Pew. When a girl had passed the marriageable age, eighteen or soon thereafter, without being garnered in, she was sent away from her father’s pew below stairs to sit in the Old Maids Pew. When that happened to Nabby H. she came home in a fine state of rage, crying that if she was a dog, she would take a dog’s place, and thereupon crawled under the dinner table, where she remained for some hours. She never could be persuaded to go to church again to the end of her days. After her parents died she lived alone in the old house, growing queerer and more ingrown — a perfectly wasted life. This incident also illustrates the change in our point of view.

But Aunt Beck and poor Nabby were of course morbid on the subject. There were others who accepted their limitations and made the most of their very narrow opportunities with no repinings.

Martha and Lucretia Gerry were the village tailoresses and most industriously they plied their trade. Up betimes, their house put in apple-pie order, by seven o’clock Patty and Chrishy, as they were always called, might be seen sitting each at her own kitchen window, stitch, stitch, stitching on the





garments that later were to appear in the meeting-house on the bodies of our most respected citizens. There were no sewing machines then and every seam had to be back-stitched with care. Often they worked by candlelight till late at night. But they worked and saved, and worked and saved, until by the time they were middle-aged they had built themselves an eight-room house, furnished it well, and filled the china closet with gold-banded china. They probably would have said that education wasn't necessary and getting married didn't matter if a woman only worked hard and minded her own business. And of course their economic independence gave them a social position they would not otherwise have occupied.

The only remark of Chrishy's that I ever heard quoted was apropos of a neighbor who had plowed a furrow off from her garden patch. "These men will bear watching," said she, and that seemed to sum up her opinion of mankind in general.

Another woman who surmounted her handicaps bravely was Aunt Mary Ann. Born with a defect in her vocal organs (I think she had no palate) her speech was muffled and obscure. But it never daunted her. She carried herself as if nothing was the matter and took her part in the social life of the village. The result was that everyone in the town could understand Aunt Mary Ann's queer talk, though strangers considered it quite unintelligible. She was tall and gaunt with large plain features and a great deal of dignity. As president of the ladies sewing society, a position she occupied for years, she showed great executive ability in caring for the poor and packing home-missionary barrels.

But it was as teacher of the men's Bible class that she shone. I have heard from the lips of more than one old man, of the liking and respect he had for Miss Mary Ann and how much he enjoyed her Bible class. This is only another illustration of the way in which a human being may rise superior to environment and physical inhibitions.

And there was Aunt Hannah, a chronic invalid during her long and painful existence, whose cheery bedroom was the social centre for the young people of the town. She was the prime mover in their literary societies and inspired them with a love for all the higher things of life.

Other aunts of more ordinary attainments might be mentioned in this list, but it is not necessary to go on. Every person in this audience who has reached the shady side of fifty can doubtless recall some such comfortable adjunct fitting into the daily life like a piece of furniture, oftentimes like a cushioned armchair, but occasionally, I regret to say, resembling a piece of furniture that was all angles, and sharp angles at that. But





the twentieth century has completed the work begun in the nineteenth.

With the advent of the nineteenth century our young Republic waked to the necessity of more Education as our new Life expanded in every direction. Here in Deerfield our Academy founded in 1797 included young females as well as boys in the lists. Girls from surrounding towns received the benefits of this new institution, girls from Hatfield being in the first enrollment. In 1820 my grandmother, with others, attended Hopkins Academy in Hadley, walking every day two miles across the meadows, crossing the Connecticut river in an old rowboat, and returning at night in the same manner. So when her daughters were growing up she decided to send them to the South Hadley Seminary just started by Mary Lyon of Buckland. To fit them for this higher education she had the girls study Latin with the minister. And that must have been a great innovation, for what use could a woman possibly have for Latin! But the Time Spirit was pushing folks along, even against their wills, certainly against their prejudices, and soon Education for women became the fashion instead of the exception.

Now to return briefly to Revolutionary times. In the middle of the eighteenth century there was living in Hatfield a family by the uncommon name of Smith. As far as the records show there was nothing to distinguish them from any others of the name. The father was a hard-working farmer just like all the other farmers, toiling early and late to subdue the soil and provide a living for his six sons. While working in the hayfield on a very hot day in 1767 a stroke of apoplexy carried off this father, who was only 52 years old, leaving his wife with very little money and six boys, the oldest of whom was only 15 and the youngest, Oliver, a child of 18 months. What the next decade or two meant in the way of privation to the widow, no one will ever know. But we do know that Oliver, the baby of the family, when he came to man's estate always had a great sympathy for poor widows, many a one being grateful for his helping hand, and when he died he left a fund for their special benefit.

Like other women of whom I have heard, this poor widow probably spun for flax,—(that is, she was paid in flax) and spun for wool, and then spun for the weaving on't.

There was probably always plenty of hasty pudding and milk, and shoes could be cobbled until they bore little resemblance to their original form. But later when prosperity came, we do not wonder that the habits of thrift and economy which often seemed niggardly or laughable to their neighbors should persist. As the boys grew up Oliver and his brother Joseph went into





business together. They bought fat cattle and drove them to Boston, investing the proceeds in stock for the village store which they owned. Their business grew until seven towns in the county furnished them with cattle for their operations.

Oliver never saw fit to marry, but Joseph, whose wife was Lois White, had seven children, three sons and four daughters. For some reason these daughters, who were known as Sophy, Harr'et, Mirandy, and Lowizy, were never married, and so belong to the group of spinsters which is the subject of my paper. Their education was sketchy. Sophy went to Hartford for a twelve-week term and also had a few weeks at Hopkins Academy. Otherwise, she and her sisters when not occupied with household duties could sit on the steps of the old brick schoolhouse which stood in the street a few rods from their house and listen to the boys' recitations.

As time went on their prosperity grew but there was no increase in their opportunities or their pleasures. Fine clothes seemed to be their only extravagance. "There go my darters with thirty bushels of rye apiece on their heads!" exclaimed their father as he saw the quartet tiptoeing across the dusty road to the meeting-house on a summer morning. And their Leghorn bonnets must indeed have been a sight for gods and men! But there was little beyond dress and the weekly sermons to furnish food for thought. Those were the days when spinning and weaving were part of the home life. So Sophy twirled her little flax wheel industriously, spinning such a fine and even thread that all the other housewives were anxious to obtain it by exchange of other commodities.

Between the years 1828 and 1831 two sisters and an unmarried brother died, leaving at home in the old house Sophy, Harr'et, and Austin, Joseph having married. It is said that when the father died he left to each of his children \$10,000, a great sum for those days. But Austin loved money. It was the only thing that he did care for. Much has been said and written about the thrift and acquisitiveness of the Smith men. In a previous paper I have described their steady opposition in town meeting to any increase in appropriations for educational purposes, Uncle Oliver patching the old schoolhouse with his own hands, "to save the town a bill," and nephew Austin reiterating that all the "book larning" a man needed was a little "readin', writin' and rithmetic," while a woman in his estimation didn't need even that.

After the death of the parents the strictest business relations were maintained between the brother and sisters. They charged him for board, and when they attained to the luxury of a horse and carriage, he charged them for "hitching up" the horse, and it was five cents on each occasion. It does not sound





like a very exhilarating form of existence, for the women at least, does it? Of course Austin was thoroughly occupied in turning over his money, investing and reinvesting to add a little more to his pile. But the sisters had their little tea-drinkings, their drives to Northampton, their new silk dresses, and the reading of the few books in the meagre town library, to fill their minds. Not much food for intellect, but then women were not supposed to have intellect in those days!

By and by Harr'et died and Sophy (who had always been the delicate one of the family) was left. Now the unpleasant spectre of Death began to appear to Austin and to demand of him what he was going to do with wealth, as he couldn't take it with him.

"The Lord will never get any of my money," he told the minister. "If the Lord wants it he'll take it" was the reply of the preacher. "Not so," said Austin, and in his heart he was thinking "I will build a noble monument that shall reflect the greatness of Austin Smith." To further this end he persuaded his sister to make her will leaving all to him, and in return he made one leaving all to her. For of course he would outlive Sophy. His mother lived to be sixty and his father seventy-seven. Didn't that prove it? Anyway, he intended to be eighty. But when he was seventy, not feeling very well, he thought better to be on the safe side.

So he went down to New York to write that will. But he was no sooner arrived there than he was taken violently ill. His alarm for fear that death should prematurely overtake him was terrible. He shut himself up in his room, continually calling for brandy (which probably did not help his case), and refused to let his friends see him. So he died and his body was brought back to Hatfield, and all his money was dropped into Sophia's lap. At first she was staggered by it. She couldn't spend it if she tried. She built herself a grand house in the Mid-Victorian style, with a Mansard roof, and furnished it with damask-covered furniture and other things to match. For diversion she went to Saratoga every summer, and sat on the hotel piazza in her elegant silk dress, with lace collar and cap, a regal-looking person.

The ministers and others who came and sat by her and shouted into her ear trumpet all wanted money for some of their charities. But she didn't wish to fritter it away in small sums. She had seen the growth of Mary Lyon's school and the idea took root in her mind that she, too, would like to do something for the education of women. As a result of the privations and meagreness of her own life came the great Desire. And so Smith College was born. Many think it should have been



The first step in the treatment of the patient is to determine the cause of the disease. This is done by a careful history and physical examination. The next step is to determine the extent of the disease. This is done by a series of laboratory tests, including blood and urine tests, and by a series of X-ray examinations. The third step is to determine the best method of treatment. This is done by a careful consideration of the patient's condition and by a consultation with the patient's family and friends. The fourth step is to carry out the treatment. This is done by a series of medical procedures, including surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. The fifth step is to follow up on the patient's condition. This is done by a series of regular check-ups and by a series of laboratory tests.

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called Sophia Smith College. Perhaps Austin and Sophia Smith College would be nearer the truth.

There have been great changes in our mode of life within a century. Those we take most account of have to do with the "things of time," as Aunt Beck would call them.

Telephones, electric lights, furnaces add to our comfort—movies, radio, and automobiles to our pleasures. But we sometimes forget that the greatest thing that has happened since we declared our independence has been the opening of the doors of learning and opportunity to woman.

With their economic independence assured they are no longer looked upon as a liability by their brothers, but have even come to be recognized as Assets in many instances.

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## A GLIMPSE INTO THE PERSONAL LIFE OF COL. JOHN HAWKS

*By Edward Brooks*

Col. John Hawks will always be remembered for his brilliant defence of Fort Massachusetts. His name will ever be associated with the last of the French wars that raged along the borders of our Province less than two hundred years ago.

Apart from his military activities which are now a matter of record very little has been known of his private life. Old letters and journals which have recently come to light depict the achievements of a man who took advantage of the opportunities life had to offer.

He was primarily a farmer; by profession a civil engineer and a large property owner as well. One of his first holdings was in Keene, N. H. where he was admitted as a proprietor in June 1734. The tract of land which he drew, classified at the time as Lot 15, is situated just north of the junction of Water and Main Streets. He was only a young man at the time, a little over 27 years of age, yet his splendid personality and character, which ripened as the years rolled on, was recognized by the other proprietors for they appointed him with Josiah Fisher of Dedham and Samuel Witt of Marlborough to "survey the whole of the Enterval to be laid out as convenient as they can be. . . to accommodate the house lots laid out by the General Court Committee. . ."

At the same time they were also instructed to "search and find out the best and most convenient way to travail from upper to lower Township." From an examination of available





records it appears that the present highway from Keene to West Swanzey has as its foundation the route laid out by Hawks and his companions in 1734. For his services he received six pounds. He had paid five pounds for the privilege of becoming a proprietor, so the remuneration from his engineering work paid for his land and gave him a pound to spare. Whether this was his first business transaction is hard to say; but it reflects the shrewdness and ability which made him one of Deerfield's wealthiest residents in later years.

After the conquest of Canada many petitions for roads were filed in the General Court at Springfield by residents of Halifax, Guilford and Winchester, to connect their towns with the larger ones in Western Massachusetts. Fresh from his successful completion of building the western half of the road from Crown Point to No. 4, Hawks was appointed chief surveyor by the General Court to do the work.

Many of the highways that weave through the jumbled hills or follow the turbulent streams in northern Hampshire Co. have as their base the lines laid down by Col. Hawks and his assistants during the 1760's.

Several of these roads are used extensively today. They connect:—

1. Athol and Winchester, N. H., via the townships of Warwick and Erving.
2. Northfield and Warwick.
3. Bernardston and Guilford, Vt.
4. Petersham through New Salem to Montague and the Connecticut River at a place known as J. Wells's Ferry.
5. Colrain and Halifax.

He was compelled to lead his men between these two towns again and again before the residents of Colrain were satisfied with the course he took. From meagre court records it appears that the Colonel was not at fault for duplication of the work; but that the trouble lay in a political squabble between the residents of Halifax and Colrain.

That Hawks had faith, and kept faith with his fellow men, is evident from the letter he wrote Luc LaCorne with regards to the redemption of his niece who was captured by the Indians at Bridgman's Fort. There is sincerity between the lines and his appeal for help is convincing. LaCorne was second in command to Vaudreuil at the surrender of Fort Massachusetts and took charge of Hawks during the subsequent trip to Canada. With the same post he sent a letter to Ephraim Williams at Lake George. Through the kind permission of the New York Historical Society both of the letters are quoted here. To LaCorne Hawks writes under date of August 22nd., 1755:—





Honour'd & Dear Sir

Time has not yet nor will it ever be able to wear away the Impressions your repeated kindnesses, imprest on my mind; I should be glad of an opportunity in some measure to requite them: Dear Sir it is a long time Since I have heard from you, I want greatly to hear of your welfare, and of your family I pray God to confer the best of Earthly comforts on you & to bring you to Eternal life in a better world. where we Shall not have different Masters to Serve, nor shall be engaged in opposite interests: at present we are unhappily divided in our interests; But Dear Sir let us love one another Sincerely: I conclude you are engaged in the public affairs of your King, and were it not against us I could allways wish you Success: and I wish all our enemies may have found the Same Benevolent disposition towards our people which I found in you in So great a degree, But alas! how Sorrowful are the Effects of war, would to God the time might come. when the nations Shall learn war no more; If ever it be my fortune to be taken I hope it will be by you; and then I Should Scarcely esteem it a Captivity.

Sir I have a Kinswoman, taken this Summer by the Indians on Connecticut River above Deerfield two other women and a number of children were taken with her. She was the daughter of my Brother Nathaniel Hawks, who died last Summer; She married Hilckiah Grout, and had three children taken with her: we have never heard what tribe of Indians took them, nor where they were carried: I Should esteem it a Special favour if you would enquire where they are & what their circumstances are; and if they Stand in need of anything necessary for their comfort if you will Supply them you shall be repaid: and I ask the favor of you to send me word where they are & what their State is and it will not be long before Mr. Grout her Husband or I my Self Shall endeavor to come & See them; I doubt not Sir but you will readily Show them kindness if you have an opportunity; for it is your nature to do good to your fellow creatures: and it will be an acceptable thing to God to do good to Such a poor helpless woman & children. Sir as to News of a public nature, you are Sensible I may not Send you any: I wish we may have the news of a lasting well established peace which we could all rejoice in; but it is God alone can give this to the nations; Sir please to give my compliments to your good Lady & family, & to all my old friends & acquaintance and accept the most





Sincere regards from Sir your most

Obedient and very Humble Servant

Deerfield Aug. 22, 1755

John Hawks

For Monsieur St Luke LaCorne

P.S. If my Kinswoman & Children are at Cognawaga, I Should be glad you would speak to Mr. Risin who desired me to let him know if I had any friends taken, and desire him to procure what favour he can among the indians for them: Mr. Risin married my nieces Aunt; please to tell him that his Sister Nims is dead — all other relations are well.

Hawks writes as follows to Ephraim Williams:—

I Send enclosed a Letter to Mr LaCorne at Montreal on the Behalf of my niece who is in Captivity: you may See the contents, & I pray you to Seal it & forward it in the best manner you can: If God Should prosper you so far as to take any Captives I hope you will take effectual care for the redemption of our people in Canada. I Lament your unhappy Delay but hope everything goes on well now: and that we Shall Soon hear from you In the Garrison at Crown Point: I trust our enemies will not find Braddocks army to encounter with; but men equal to them in Courage & dexterity, who will not be terrified by the yellings (of) Blackskins. I long to be with you, and could hardly stay here had I but another legg: we have nothing new to send you the enemy Seems to be drawn off for the present & no late discoveries except a few at Coll. Hinsdales fort in the night: I very much expect they will attack you on your march hoping to disappoint you as they did General Braddock. but I trust you will allways be prepared for them: all friends are well. .

I am Sir your most obedient & very Humble Servant

Deerfield August 22, 1755

John Hawks

For Coll Ephraim Williams

That Col. Hawks had met with some accident is apparent. The statement in his letter to Ephraim Williams is corroborated by an old account of Dr. Thomas Williams. There are several entries of "Dress Hawks", and the names of medicines used. What the nature of the accident was is not clear but it undoubtedly accounts for his failure to be with his commanding officer.





He recovered rapidly, however, as he wrote his wife from Fort Lyman on October 5th.

He was not as prompt in letter writing during the campaign of 1758 and his neglect in this respect brought forth the following letter from her.

Dear Sir;—

1781006

It is with Pleasure and Satisfaction that I receive your Letters though I am not surfiated with Pleasures of that kind. You being so much engaged in marching and countermarching as not to find time to send me more than one Letter since your inglorious seige of Ticonderoga. tho' I flatter myself when you are a little at leisure You will be so good as to send me an account whether you are alive or not so that I may know how to behave myself.

Our Family and Friends are well, tho' at Greenfield it is very sickly Time with a Dysentary. of which Miss Alleyn two of Elisha Wells Children have dyed, and also one of Sam Stebbins Sns are dead. several others are dangerously ill.

last Sabbath Day 2 oClock afternoon the Indians took four Persons at No.4. Viz Asahel Stebbins and Wife Isaac Parker Junr and one Hill a Soldier as they were getting Water Millions about half a Mile from the fort. The Indians were about 50 in Number as they Judge. We have nothing further material to write.

(The tone in the last paragraph of her letter is a reversal of the first as she closed with more affection:—)

I wish You the best of Heavens Blessings. and Life and Health quick and safe return to me who am Your loving and Dutiful

WIFE

Yet she did not give him the satisfaction of writing the letter in her own hand for at the lower right hand corner of the sheet are the words, "Elizabeth Hawks per order."

It is a truism that he who does the best talks the least. In spite of his military and civic responsibilities which he bore so successfully Col. Hawks was not an egoist. The brief entries in his journals and short impersonal letters would prove this statement. He seldom mentions himself. The pronoun "I" is hardly ever used. In the journal that he kept while in charge of the Colrain forts his reticence is pronounced. There is entry upon entry of "Cept fort" or "nothing remarkable." Now and then he comes out with some bit of information which draws aside the curtain of the past and gives a clearer vision of his activities.

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He did not permit an idle hour to enter his daily life. When he was not busy with the details of his own fort he was at another or ranging the woods, burning brush or reaping oats. There were several occasions when he came to Deerfield to escort the doctor to some post where sickness was prevalent. In a weeks time he went from Colrain to Charlemont, visited the forts there, then on to Deerfield, Hatfield, Northampton and back home. Fast time when the only means of locomotion in those days was by horseback.

His military duties did not keep him busy all of the time as a few entries taken at random from his journal will show.

On the 20th. of July he left Deerfield with Capt. Morrison and a team which carried, under guard, a barrel of rum and a barrel and a half of cider. For some reason not explained, they left it at the meeting house in Colrain for the night and brought it to the fort the next morning. In August Capt. Morrison brought to the garrison a man sick with smallpox. Hawks notified Israel Williams and received the following orders;—

I think Capt morrison extreemly to blame, for bringing ye man to his house whilst under suspition of having the Small pox—But as the case now is—I think the Comtee for ye affairs of Colrain, who I conclude act in many respects as Selectmen in Towns, should take care of ye Sick Person, and provide Nurses for him, and none permitted to go near him but of necessity—If he can be removd with Safety to some other place, It ought to be done forwith, for if continued where he now is, the men at the Garrison, may be greatly exposed—but if too late for that—Then post some of the Soldiers at ye Garrison that have had ye Disease, with this order not to go near him, but Watch ye Garrison,—and remove your Self with the rest to that Garrison where the men can best be recd and perform the Scouting as heretofore ordered, and direct the Scouts from Fall Town &c to avoid ye place—dont suffer any Person that has been with the Sick, to come to you without being Sufficently air'd Caution the People to prevent its Spreading, otherwise it will cause ye remove of ye Soldiers out of ye Place...

The Colonel was busy the next few days transferring the men to other forts. Whether the disease was fatal, and who the man was he does not say; but in a month's time the soldiers were back at their posts and the work of protecting the frontiers went on in its daily routine.

During the following September he spent a good deal of time bee hunting with successful results. He was also busy building a house near the fort. There are many entries of getting





shingles, timbers and stone and building a chimney. On the 22nd. of October he records, "Raised my house." Two weeks later he moved in.

That our New England climate was as fickle two hundred years ago as it is today is shown in his entry of March 12th., two years later

Set out for taylors went a litel way got discouraged it was so hot and thawed so much I turnd a Bout and stad at home in the After Noon tapped some trees At Night it rained and hailed.

When deeply moved or particularly interested in any of life's varied phases his entries are somewhat longer. The following record of March 15th., 1759 is an example of his glibness.

marthr morson was marr[i]ed a Numbor of Grenfield and Derfield yo[u]n[g]stors came to wedden a hot good supper was provided and a grat froleck ye yongters had after ye old men was gone Danc till ye 16 a bout 11 o'clock and then Broke up and all went home and left us all slepy the rest of the Day was spent in Slep by grat part of ye fort.

In 1752 he had some trouble with Elijah Williams who was at the time Treasurer of Deerfield. Hawks had given his bond to pay to Williams the sum of nine pounds on demand. For two years Williams tried to collect it with no success with the result that he brought suit against the Colonel and attached his property to the value of twelve pounds. A search through the Court records for further details has been without reward. Undoubtedly the case was settled before the date of the trial and it is safe to assume that the Colonel won his point as he usually did.

From early manhood he developed an instinct for business. In 1754 he bought from Moses Scott a quarter interest in a saw mill that the latter had built in Bernardston. For this share he paid fourteen pounds, nineteen shillings and eight pence. How long he held it is not definitely known. There is no mention of it in the will he made before his departure for Fort Lyman in 1755 nor in his last will which he signed three weeks before his death. The only clue to a sale is a memorandum on the back of a bill dated 1770 which reads "note to be given to Colo. Hawks when he makes a deed of a mill..."

Trading in real estate seems to have been his forte. There are many deeds that show the transactions he made. That he was one of the largest property owners in Deerfield is reflected on an old tax return of 1777 wherein he was assessed twenty-three hundred pounds on real estate and over six hundred on personal property, with a total tax of eleven pounds and five shillings.





It can be assumed that he did what would be termed today as a banking business. There is an old letter from John Carver in Montague requesting the Col. to lend him seven pounds "at double interest" on good security.

How much cash he accumulated will probably never be known. In his will of 1755 he made provisions for a distribution of eighty pounds between his wife and children; but in his last will he does not mention this item. Only real estate, personal effects, household furniture and the live stock on his farm are distributed evenly among his survivors.

There was nothing apparently he could not do. Soldier, pathfinder, leader of men, he carried all of his tasks to a successful completion and by his deeds he is entitled to as much glory as his contemporaries whose names have echoed through the pages of history.

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## THE FIRST MAPS OF POCUMTUCK

*By Gertrude Cochrane Smith*

I would present to this Society today photostatic copies of the three original surveys of this region on which are based the three successive Grants by the General Court of the Colonial Government, and which record the right of Deerfield and the four other Towns laid off from that original territory, i.e., Greenfield, Conway, Shelburne, and Gill, to the lands which they occupy.

The first is a copy of the original survey of the 8000 acres at Pocumtuck made by Joshua Fisher in May, 1665, on which was based the Grant of said acres to Dedham.

The second is a survey by Timothy Dwight made in 1717 of what is called the "Seven Miles Square Grant" made to the inhabitants of Pocumtuck in 1673.

The third is the survey made by Timothy Dwight in 1743 of the "Additional Grant of 1712" made at the petition of the Reverend John Williams.

I would also present copies of the surveys of this Town ordered by the State Legislature in 1794 and 1830.

As far as possible, consistent with the time allowed, I will let Mr. Sheldon tell the story of the bounds, and slip in these original documents at the proper places.

Mr. Sheldon opens his History of Deerfield in this way:—

" 'The Renowned Noble Lady Armina', amid the luxuries of her ancestral hall in old Lincolnshire, meditating upon the lost condition of the heathen in the New World, putting up her





prayers and sending her gold across the seas for their redemption, represents a deeply seated sentiment of her time. It was her aim, that the occupancy of New England should result not only in the accumulation of earthly riches by the adventurers, but should redound to the glory of God in a large harvest of souls through the conversion of its barbarian inhabitants. Capt. George Weymouth, a historian of the times, active in promoting the settlement of our shores, testifies that the main end of all these undertakings was to plant the gospel in these dark regions of America . . . . . With the missionary spirit of the Lady Armina, however, the Pocumtuck Valley is directly and intimately connected. Her bounty expended in behalf of the Natick Indians, in a great degree determined the time and manner of the settlement of Deerfield.

"The apostle Eliot, being filled with zeal for the conversion of the natives, learned their language and devoted himself to their instruction in Christian doctrines. Very soon he perceived that his teaching could have little effect so long as the Indians continued their national manner of living — that they must be civilized before they could be Christianized. He therefore bent his energies to the task of collecting the roving savages into permanent settlements, where he could instruct them in the 'arts of civilitie', and where their children could be taught in schools. Eliot's first attempt to form an Indian town was at Nonantum Hill, in Newton. This proved a failure, mainly, as he thought, on account of its proximity to Boston; finding, like most missionaries, the example of a so-called Christian community unfavorable to making proselytes from heathenism to Christianity. About this time the General Court encouraged Mr. Eliot to continue his labors, and at his motion passed laws recognizing, in a manner, the Indian title in the land, and placing the natives in many respects on an equal footing with the colonists.

"For a second trial, Eliot pitched upon Natick, sixteen miles west of Boston, where in 1651 the General Court set apart two thousand acres for an Indian plantation, and the £20 per annum, given by the Lady Armina, was placed at his disposal. Here the 'Praying Indians' were collected, civil government established, and a church organized. The tract thus occupied proved to be territory belonging to Dedham, and for twelve years there was much trouble and litigation between the inhabitants of that town and the settlers at Natick. Both parties repeatedly appealed to the judicial and legislative authorities for redress. At length, on the first day of May, 1662, the General Court decided,—

' . . . . that although the legall right of Dedham thereto cannot in justice be denied, yet such haue binn





the encouragement of the Indians in their improvements thereof, the wch, added to their native right, wch cannot, in strict justice, be vtterly extinct, doe therefore order, that the Indians be not dispossessed of such land as they at present are possessed of there, but that the same, wth convenient accommodations for wood & timber, & high-ways thereto, be set out & bounded by Mr. Thomas Danforth, Mr. Wm. Parkes, Mr. Ephraim Child, Mr. Edw. Jackson, or any three of them, who are hereby appointed a Committee to execute this order, and that the damages thereby susteined by Dedham, together wth the charges expended in suite about the same, be also considered & determined by sd Committee & such allowance made them out of Naticke, lands or others yet lying in common, as they shall judge equal.'

"A report from this Committee was acted upon in June, 1663, and,—

'For a finale issue of the case betweene Dedham & Natick, the Court judgeth meete to graunt Dedham eight thousand acres of land in any convenient place or places, not exceeding two, where it can be found free from former graunts, provided Dedham accept this offer.'

Dedham did accept this offer and considered at a town meeting called in January, 1664, "whether to sell their graunt", or "be at any further charge about seeking out land to take satisfaction in." It was voted to leave the matter in the hands of the Selectmen.

The Selectmen having heard of land near Lancaster, one of their number, Lieut. Joshua Fisher, with a man named Fairbanks, proceeded to Lancaster to view the same, but brought back the report that it was already "so entered upon by several farms that it is altogether incapable of supply to us."

Miss Alice Baker says it is exactly at this point that the history of Deerfield begins. Following the records:—The Selectmen in further pursuance of this case concerning the 8000 acres above mentioned, "haueing heard of a considerable Tract of good land that might be answerable to the Town's expectation, about 12 or 14 miles from Hadley . . . thinke it meet, in the behalfe of the Towne to provide that that 8000 Acres may be chosen and layed out to sattisfie that grant ther, wth all conueanient speed, before any other Grantee enter upon it and pruent vs." Eight men or any four of them "whereof Lieft: Fisher is to be one," were appointed, empowered and entrusted "to repayer to the place mentioned," to choose and lay out the land "to their best discretion," each man being promised "one hundreth Acres of Land in full satisfaction for thier paynes," only to Lieut. Fisher as much more as the Town should judge





would make the case equal. Further progress in the work was prevented by the coming on of winter, during which some unwillingness seems to have been shown by the committee to undertake the business on the terms offered by the Selectmen.

As appears from the records of March 20, 1665, the difficulty was amicably settled, when "vpon further consideration" of laying out the 8000 acres, Lieut. Fisher's "peremptory demaund being 300 acres, it is consented vnto provided he allso drawe for the Towne true and sufficient platt of that tract and Edw: Richards, Antho: Fisher Junior, and Tymo: Dwight, accept of the payment formerly tendered (at March 5 meeting), vizt. 150 achers to each of them," provided also that if Timothy Dwight be unable to attend to the business himself, he agree to furnish Sergt. Richard Ellice with a horse for the journey. The work was accomplished without delay.

"May 22, 1665, (the Selectmen) Assemb: in the morning to receaue the retorne of the Comittee deputed to lay out the 8000 Acres of Land for the Towne.

"The Comittee aforesaid doe enforme that they haue layed out all the grants of 8000 acres aforesaid, in land as they Judg conueanient in quallitie and scituation, for the accomadacion of a plantation and being by their estimation, about 10 miles distant from Hadly, the more particular description where of they shall giue account at some other conueanient time."

On the 11th of October this more particular description was laid before the General Court. It was certified and figured as laid out by Joshua Fisher, May, 1665. The original survey is to be found preserved in the State Archives, 3rd Series, Vol. 1, pages 24, 27. We have here to-day the photostat of this document. The original is on light brown paper done in sepia india ink. It was evidently preserved folded for many years, and on the old folds is much worn, which shows plainly in the photostat.

It reads as follows:—

"This tract of land, conteyning eight thousand acres, being layd out according to this plot beginning . . . . ."

Here I insert my own description, as it is obviously impossible to follow the survey without seeing it. The east line is run along the west side of our East mountain at its foot, beginning at a point the north side of our Deerfield river where the bridges are now located, and extending south along the entire mountain 7 miles and 86 rods, stopping at a point a mile or so below Sugar Loaf; thence on a "strayt" line two and a half miles west by one half a point southerly; thence north on the other side of Mill river four miles, crossing the Deerfield; thence





continuing northerly running on the east side of our West mountain at its foot until it meets the river again; thence along the northern side of the river one mile twenty rods to the starting point. On the plat the east mountain is described as a "Rockie Mountaine between Conetticut River and Pecompetuk and the western hills rockie hills and mountaines."

We return to the record:—"This tract of land is lajd out at a place called Pecumptick, to answer the grant of the honored Generall Court made to Dedham for lands at Natick, which the Indians are setled vpon by the Courts order, it lyinge northward from Hadley about tenn or twelue miles. Layd out as abouesajd May, 1665,

By me, Joshua Fisher."

This description of the plat is written at the top. At the lower corner is the following:—

"The Deputies approve of this return desiring the Consent of ye Honored Magisty. a Signed

William Correy Oliver."

The "Magisty's" consent hereto "provided they make a town of it, to majntejne the ordinances of Christ there once wthin five yeares, & that it interfere not wth Majr Genll Dennison & Hadley grant" there before given the Deputies Consent.

"Signed

Edward Rawson, Secretary.

Consented to by ye Deputies

Signed William Correy Oliver

25:8:1665."

Would that I could bring to you a movie reel and run off for you a picture of those pioneers staking out the first claim of the white man to the lands of the Pocumtucks. But we will have to exercise that old-fashioned faculty of the imagination, if it so be that it is not too atrophied from disuse. Instead, I will read to you the opening picture of Deerfield's most recent storyteller, Mary Williams Fuller:

"Three hundred years ago the waters gathering at the foot of the Green Mountains in southern Vermont had merged themselves into a turbulent, rushing river which came, hurrying through the deep gorges and wild ravines of the western hills to spread themselves leisurely out in brown ripples and placid still places along the meadows of the wide and lovely valley we know as Deerfield. The Indians called the river and the state-ly hill that stands solemn guard to the east, Pocumtuck, the name of their tribe.

"This was to them a favorite spot. How long they had dwelt there, there is no telling. Wherever the land rises above high-water-mark of the ever recurring spring floods of the river,





traces of their habitation can be found. Arrowheads, stone implements, and bits of pottery are even to this day turned up by the plow or discovered by the process of digging. Graves of many an Indian warrior have been unearthed with accompanying stone weapons or other symbolic weapons.

"Tradition tells us that at the time of the coming of the white man to the shores of Massachusetts the Indians were dwelling here in well-established security. The Pocumtucks seem to have been a powerful tribe not lacking in dignity and pride. They were an agricultural people. Corn grew in the fertile meadows; game abounded on the wooded hillsides; salmon and shad as well as smaller fish swam in the streams . . . . . For many years friendly relations existed between the Indians of this region and the early settlers of Wethersfield, Windsor, Springfield, Hadley and Hatfield.

"The Pocumtucks were at times at war with other tribes, but they seem to have maintained their supremacy till about 1660 . . . . . Soon after 1660, a fierce war broke out between the Pocumtucks and the Mohawks from the Hudson River Valley in which the Mohawks proved victorious. The Pocumtucks were almost exterminated, and this, perhaps, accounts for the ease with which men sent here from Dedham in 1665 were able to purchase 8000 acres of land with which Dedham was to reimburse her people whose land there had been taken for John Eliot's missionary Indians."

"The Colonial Government having thus taken two thousand acres from Dedham for the benefit of the Natick Indians, and given in exchange eight thousand acres belonging to the Pocumtuck Indians, the town of Dedham now took steps to buy the same of the native owners."

As our interest to-day is focussed on the bounds of Deerfield, we will pass over the events of the next seven years as quickly as may be; the changing hands of the rights in the new territory; the buying up and speculation in these rights; the first settlers, Samuel Hinsdale, Samson Frary, and possibly Godfrey Nims; the laying out of the town plat, roads, and meadow lands; the drawing of these home lots and meadow lands.

"Dedham had hardly taken possession of her new estate before Hatfield complained of encroachment. In May, 1672, she petitioned the General Court for redress, claiming that the grant as laid out, extended one and three-quarters of a mile over her north line. The Court appointed Peter Tilton, William Clarke and Samuel Smith, a committee to 'regulate and settle' the disputed line. Sept. 20th these gentlemen viewed the premises, and on the 9th of October reported to the Court that they had,—





‘Ordered that Hatfield bounds northerly shall extend to a little brooke commonly called, by the English, Sugar Loafe Brook, at the comon place of passage ouer, where there is two trees marked, a little white oake on the west side of the way, and a great white oake on the east side of sajd way; and so to runne by the sajd line east to the Great Riuer, and on the west ljne from sajd riuer, two miles into the woods.

‘Also the sajd Committee have determined that the Proprietors of Pocumtuck for and in consideration of the land taken out of their measure to acomodate Hatfield, they shall receiue it as followeth, vizt: on the north side o Pocumtuck Riuer, from the mouth of the ryver called Greene Riuer, a ljne to run due east one mile, and west one mile, and north three-quarters of a mile; the whole tract of land to be two miles in length and three-quarters of a mile in breath, and for the remajnder to begin at Pocumtock Riuer, at the end of there propritjes, and to rune on an east ljne to the Great Riuer, and to extend to a south lyne two miles’.”

The Cheapside and Great River district of to-day.

“This return was approved by the Court, Oct. 11, 1672. The north line of Pocumtuck as thus established in 1672 is . . . the famous ‘8000 acre line’,” to maintain which the patriotic descendants of the original settlers fought successfully for 223 years, until they lost out in 1895, and it was set off to Greenfield.

The next episode in Deerfield history Mr. Sheldon calls “cutting the apron strings” and the “Seven Miles Square Grant.” “An examination of Dedham records shows that the municipal affairs of the new plantation were for years exclusively under the control of the mother town. As the inconvenience of this arrangement became manifest, measures were taken to bring the ruling powers nearer home.”

Samuel Hinsdale was sent twice to Dedham to make some arrangement whereby the prudential affairs of the fast growing settlement could be managed by a committee at the settlement. No satisfactory action was taken; so “Samuel Hinsdale was again sent through the wilderness to the Bay, this time with an appeal to a higher power. The following action of the General Court at its session of May 7, 1673, shows the issue of this enterprise:—

‘In ans to the peticon of the inhabitants of Paucump-tucke, Samuell Hindsdale, Sampson Frary, &c the Court judgeth it meete to allow the peticoners the liberty of a touneship, and doe therefore grant them such an addition of land to the eight thousand acres formerly granted there





to Dedham, as that the whole be to the content of seven miles square, provided that an able & orthodox minister wthn three yeares be settled among them, and that a farme of two hundred & fifty acres of land be layd out for the countrys vse; and doe further appointt & impower Left Wm Allyes, Thos Meakins, Sen & Sergent Isaack Graues, wth Left Samuel Smith, Mr. Peeter Tylton, & Samuel Hindsell, to be a Committee, and any fower of them to act in all respects to lay out ye said farme in a convenient place to admit inhabitants, grant lands, & order all their prudentiall affaires till they shall be in a capacity, by meet persons from among themselves, to manage their owne affaires, & that the committee be advised wth about settling of a minister there.—(Mass. Records, IV, Part II, 558.)' . . . . .

"The territory of Pocumtuck, as laid out under the above grant, is almost identical with that now occupied by the towns of Deerfield, Greenfield and Gill. The farm of two hundred and fifty acres for the 'countrys vse' was laid out in the north part of the additional grant. 'Country Farms', in Greenfield, probably indicates its location . . . . .

"By some unknown process of mensuration," says Mr. Sheldon, "our thrifty progenitors seem to have extended this 'addition' so as to cover a territory lying along the Connecticut from Whately to Northfield, of about seventy square miles, including the Dedham Grant."

By this Grant of the Common Court the inhabitants of Pocumtuck obtained both their territorial and ecclesiastical liberty and were therefore free from Dedham. "For," says Mr. Sheldon, "in default of any subsequent action to this end, the 'Liberty of a touneship' may well be taken as an act of incorporation of the town."

The grant of territory, you will notice, was made to the inhabitants of Pocumtuck, not to the proprietors of the 8000 acres. The original settlers all held their land by virtue of being Dedham grantees or their legal successors. Cheapside, Great River, and the Seven Miles Square Grant were made to the inhabitants of Pocumtuck, the actual settlers. These two groups then were joint owners of the land, and the interests of the "Proprietors" were merged with the larger grant to the "Inhabitants." They held meetings in 1673 and 1674, and it was at these joint meetings of proprietors and inhabitants that the settlement began to be called Deerfield.

This organization of Proprietors was kept up for over 100 years, and until all the land was disposed of. Their record books, full and complete, are preserved in our Town Office.





The wiping out of this little settlement by the Indians and all of the troublous times which follow, we pass over, as acquiring new territory was not in the thoughts of the harassed settlers. Thirty-eight years later, before Queen Anne's War was actually over, we find the Reverend John Williams petitioning the General Court for an additional grant of land. The petition of Mr. Williams is not found, and the only record of the transaction is that of the Council, as follows:—

“May 28: 1712 In Council

Upon reading a petition of Mr. John Williams Minister of Deerfield in behalf of the sd Town of Deerfield praying yt ye Bounds of ye sd Town may extend Westward from Connecticut River as Northampton and Hatfield Doe viz. nine miles from ye River into ye Western woods. . . . .

Concurred by ye House of Representatives

Consented to J. Dudley.”

Three years later a dispute with Northfield over the boundary line between that town and Deerfield led to hunting up the records, and the re-confirmation of the Seven Miles Square Grant of 1673.

“ ‘June 11 1717 Upon Reading a Petition of Thomas Wells, Representative of ye Town of Derefield, setting forth that the General Court in ye year 1673 Granted to said Town an addition of a Tract of land that was to be laid out at the north end of the said Town, and to contain the quantity of Seven Miles Square, wch Land was accordingly laid out & the Bound Marks still to be seen. But upon Searching the Records they cannot find any Entry thereof; Praying that it may now be allowed & confirmed & be of Record to prevent future Trouble.’

“Wells was directed to make a plan of the tract by the old bounds and present it to the Court at its next session. Pursuant to the above order, a plan was presented to the House Oct. 29, 1717, which was accepted. But the Council non-concurred. Nov. 9th a committee of Conference was appointed of five from the House, and three from the Council,—

“That having maturely considered the Evidences and Pleas therabout, are humbly of opinion, that the Bounds of the Seven Miles Square granted to Deerfield, Shall be and Remain According to Platt now exhibited to this Great and General Court; Provided the line run from the north end of said Tract to the Great River be an East line.’

“The report was adopted. The objectors were doubtless Northfield people, but the particular points in the controversy do not appear.”

A copy of this plan accepted by the General Court is the second of the original surveys we are considering to-day.





It is the survey of Timothy Dwight. Not the actual but the general course of the Connecticut River is protracted from the Hatfield bound at the river to the mouth of Fall River. That general course is north 19 degrees east. The west line is run parallel to this one. The north line as ordered by the court is an east and west line. The south bound is the one fixed by the commission which settled the bound with Hatfield in 1672; also an east and west line. The whole contains 31360 acres. It is accepted by the House of Representatives but read on Oct. 2, 1717, by the Council and non-concurred; to make this record complete we should therefore have the subsequent concurrence of the Council. The west line of the "Seven Miles Square Grant" was then, and is still called the "Seven Mile Line," and can still be traced from Whately to Colrain.

With the advent of a new neighbor on the west it becomes necessary to look up and confirm the "Additional Grant of 1712" petitioned for by Rev. John Williams, the confirmation of which by the Council we have already read, and which carried the west boundary nine miles from the river into the western woods.

"In 1736 a township was granted Capt. Ephraim Hunt and his company for services in the Canada campaign of 1690. It was to be laid out adjoining Deerfield on the west. A controversy soon arose between the Proprietors of Pocumtuck and the Proprietors of 'Huntstown' respecting the boundary line between them. This was settled only after appeals to the General Court and the Judiciary.

"In 1736 the town made provision for 'Surveying ye River on ye East side of the Town' as a basis for establishing the Seven Mile Line, as all agreed that the west line of the Additional Grant should be parallel to this, as this must be parallel to the river. A plan of the whole township was made based on this survey.

'May 30 1737, Thomas Wells Esq of Deerfield is chose & appointed in ye name & in behalf of sd Town to appear in ye Great & General Court of this Province, then and there to do any & all things that shall be conducive to get a plat of sd Township confirmed.'

"The Legislature was then in session and Esquire Wells was soon before it with his petition:—

'June 29 1737. In the House of Representatives, Ordered, that Col. Chandler, Col. Almy, & Capt Hobson, with such as shall be joined by the Honl Board be a Comtee to take the plat of the township of Deerfield under consideration, and the papers Accompanying the same, Relating to the lines of boundaries of said Town, that they carefully examine the said plat & consider the said papers





& make Report thereon, so far as may relate to the true west line of said Town for the Courts further consideration & order in adjusting the same agreeable to the Additional Grant.'

"The Council added William Dudley and Joseph Wild to this committee. Probably Wells's plan was not found to be sufficiently accurate or comprehensive to base final action upon; at any rate another town meeting was called.

"July 22, 1737, Thomas Wells, Ebenezer Smead and Elijah Williams were made a committee to 'Survey the Township of Deerfield, & get an accurate plan of sd Township to lay before the General Court as soon as may be.'

"The plan was made, and laid before the General Court, but by some means never understood by the people of Deerfield, the plan disappeared while awaiting legislative action. The whole matter seems to have then dropped until the Proprietors of Pocumtuck became alarmed by the proceedings of the Huntstown settlers and took the matter into their own hands.

"Feb. 2d, 1741, at a Proprietors meeting Thomas Wells was again called to the front and 'Appointed to procure a Plan of the Township forthwith,' and a committee was chosen 'to run the west side of the town & see the same well marked.'

"The plan made under the above vote was probably the one presented to the General Court by Elijah Williams, the representative from Deerfield, in July following. With this plan he offered this memorial in behalf of the town:—

'Some years ago, a plat of sd Township was presented to this Court for Confirmation, but so it was, that either said plat was taken from the files, or was mislaid so that it could never be found to this Day & the sd Town have at great charge and trouble procured another plan of sd Town & the sd Town labors under many inconveniences for want of having the bounds of sd Town confirmed and established:

'Therefore your Memorialist Humbly prays that a consideration of the sd affair may be had and the plat now presented passed upon by this Court & your petitioner as in Duty bound shall ever pray.

Elijah Williams'."

A copy of this plat is our third record. On the back of said plat is written the following record:

"A Plat of Deerfield Township, viz. the whole of it, as well as the Seven Miles Square already confirmed by the Great and General as the Additional Grant made them by that Court in May, Anno Domini 1712, Court Anno Domini 1717, the Sd Additional Grant begins at a large Chestnut Tree at the Country Farms so-called which is the North West Corner of the Seven



the first of these is the fact that the  
the second is the fact that the  
the third is the fact that the

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the thirty-fifth is the fact that the  
the thirty-sixth is the fact that the

Miles Square already Confirmed and runs from thence West 1670 perch to two large white oak Trees standing close together mark'd & from thence South 19 degrees West 3860 perch to a great Hemlock tree Mark'd with stones heap'd about it & thence East 1670 perch to the South West Corner of the Seven Miles Square and from thence along by the sd Seven Miles Square North 19 degrees East 3860 perch to the Chestnut Tree at the Country Farm above mentioned.

"The whole of said tracts cover 69480 acres, which is equal to nine miles wide the whole length of Deerfield Township according to the Confirmation of the Seven Miles Square protracted to a scale of 380 perches to an Inch. Surveyed in August Anno Domini 1736.

Timothy Dwight, Surveyor.

"Hampshire July 10, 1741. Timothy Dwight Subscriber to the above Return personally appearing before me made Oath that in making the Survey of the Township of Deerfield he acted truly and judiciously and that the sd Survey is truly and fairly represented by the within Plat and the fore going return according to the best of his skill and judgment.

Eben Pomroy: Just: Pace.

"In the House of Representatives Aug 1, 1741. Read and ordered that this Platt be accepted provided the land herein delineated and described exceed not the quantity of the Grant and does not interfere with any former grant. Sent up for Concurrence.

In Council Aug. 3rd, 1741 — Read & Concurred.  
J. William Strong.

J. Hobson Spahr

Aug. 4—Concurred to J. Belcher."

The tenor of this petition evidently conveyed to the Court that this was its last chance, that Deerfield was on her dignity. The result was its hasty confirmation.

The Huntstown or Ashfield people did not accept the survey without more fighting. The trouble was over the angle of the general line of the Connecticut River to which both agreed the Seven Mile line and the western bound of the Additional Grant should be parallel. The next year after a hearing before the General Court, Deerfield won out. But in 1763 when Conway was set off as a separate Town a diagonal piece about 100 rods wide was set off to Ashfield.

The Additional Grant of 1712 is the last Grant of territory to Deerfield. Just twelve years after its confirmation in 1741 begins the "setting off fever," as our historian calls it.

In 1753 Greenfield is set off as a separate Township. In 1767 the Town of Conway begins its separate existence, and the next year, Shelburne.





In the official survey ordered by the Commonwealth in 1794 Deerfield has nearly shrunk back to the 8000 acres; all that is left additional is Cheapside and the Great River District plus some territory to the east and west which was added with the Seven Miles Square Grant.

The survey is interesting, as it shows the old roads and ferries. It was made by David Hoyt.

The Survey of 1830 was ordered by the Legislature and was made by Arthur Hoyt. On this plan are indicated all of the grist and saw mills.



# ANNUAL MEETING—1932

## REPORT

In the Council Room at Memorial Hall the 62nd annual meeting of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association was held on Tuesday, February 23rd, Vice President George Arms Sheldon presiding. J. M. Arms Sheldon as Curator of the Sheldon Collection reported more than a hundred gifts to the association and a satisfactory number of visitors to the hall, and she commented upon their various ways of viewing such an extensive collection. A notable acquisition was the sword of Rear Admiral Higginson. Financial reports were made by the treasurer and by trustees of the Permanent Fund, Sheldon Publishing Fund and Old Indian House Homestead. All *officers* of the Association were reelected.

Tributes to three deceased members were read. That to Honorable Franklin G. Fessenden of Greenfield, for some thirty years a justice of the Superior Court of this Commonwealth, was written and read by Judge Thompson; that to Rear-Admiral Francis J. Higginson by Mrs. Mary W. Fuller. The paper on Mrs. Maria Jane Catlin Hoyt, written by her daughter, was read by Miss Jane Pratt. Mrs. Sheldon presented a short paper on "A Stone Pipe."

Interesting features of our afternoon meeting are the informal discussions and anecdotes following the reading of papers, and often suggested by facts and views set forth by the writers.

After a general reunion and visiting bee as the audience gathered and took their seats in the town hall and following the gradual disappearance of a great quantity of excellent food served by the ladies of Old Deerfield, the program of the evening observed the bicentennial of Washington's birth. "Heath, the General of George Washington, and Heath, the Town" was the subject of an interesting and instructive address by Miss Flora White. Jonathan A. Saxton's "Ode to Washington", which was sung in Deerfield just a hundred years ago, was read by William G. Avirett.\*

During the evening four songs of the period of the first president were given by the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy,

\*NOTE:—This was also sung here in 1898 and is printed Vol. III, page 471. J. A. S. (1795-1874) was the father of Major S. W. Saxton (1829-1933) for whom see report of 1934 meeting.





to the great pleasure of the audience. Jonathan P. Ashley presented a paper depicting George Washington as an intelligent, industrious and far-sighted farmer; and Miss Margaret Whiting gave the audience a "Glimpse of Washington" which she had obtained through her childhood friendship with the daughter and son of a Revolutionary soldier.

Miss Miller read a newspaper account of the burial of Washington and Judge Thompson gave the association an ancient copy of letters, one written in 1782 by Lady Asgill in London to Count DeVergennes supplicating him to dispatch a letter from France to General Washington, and one from the Count to Washington stating that "the King and Queen" were "Extremely affected by Lady Asgill's letter" and asking the release of her only son, "a prisoner under the articles of Capitulation of York Town." The evening closed with the singing of "America".

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## REPORT OF CURATOR

The bright lights in the record of our Association for the year 1931 are the following:—

7,577 visitors to Memorial Hall from 41 states and 19 foreign countries. In face of the extreme financial depression in America and Europe this report is good.

104 gifts to the Association, some of which have rare historical value. Among the latter is a large volume, entitled "A Compendious History of the Catholic Church from the year 600 untill the year 1600," published in 1662. This book bears on the fly leaf the names of Reverend John Williams, his son Stephen and his grandson, Stephen.

Another gift is the Martin Kellogg Bible. This Martin Kellogg was born in 1734, the son of Joseph Kellogg, an Indian interpreter. The Bible contains a record of the family of Martin Kellogg and his wife, Phyllis.

Another rare treasure is a candlestick that belonged to Thomas Jefferson, and was used in his home, Monticello. It was given to one of Thomas Jefferson's slaves, and a descendant of this slave gave it to the donor, Mrs. S. W. Mercer of Richmond, Va.

It is always gratifying to the Association to receive legacies. By the will of Mrs. Mary Powers Greenwood of Montague we possess a fine oil lamp about 145 years old. It is the flat-wick type which came into use in 1783.

Recently Mrs. Grace G. Higginson, wife of Rear-Admiral Francis J. Higginson has sent us the Admiral's sword, epaulets





and other treasures. These will be placed in the Civil War room.

The Association has received from one of its members, the "Washington Bicentennial Plaque" which is authorized by the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission. The Houdon Portrait was chosen for the Plaque which represents Washington much younger than the Gilbert Stuart portrait. Coming in this bicentennial year the gift is most appropriate.

Other contributions have been noticed in the columns of *The Gazette and Courier*.

One more bright light is the fact that teachers are coming more and more to realize that classes of thirty or forty children cannot do satisfactory work in Memorial Hall. A good example was set this summer when the Director of a boys' camp brought to the Hall two or three times a small number of boys, accompanied by a teacher who evidently knew what she wanted the children to see. We hope this condition will prevail in the future.

The darker side of the picture is caused by the spirit of speeding which has taken possession of our people. It is a fact that there is a marked difference in the spirit of the visitors to-day from that of twenty years ago. It is impossible for the curator to take a party through the seventeen rooms of the Hall, pointing out the more important relics in each room, in less than an hour and a half; two hours are really needed. When I say the majority of people do not stay longer than thirty or forty minutes it is evident that little satisfactory work can be done. It is devoutly to be wished that there may be a reaction, and we may strike the rational mean when people will take time to see things as they are, and to think about them.

The assistant, Miss Mellen, has not only kept the Hall in excellent condition and catalogued the yearly books and pamphlets which have been given, but she has also added greatly to the charm of the Memorial Hall grounds by her beautiful vines and shrubs and her rare and colorful flower garden.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON.

Deerfield, Feb. 23, 1932.





# ANNUAL MEETING—1933

## REPORT

In the afternoon of the twenty-eighth day of February George Arms Sheldon, Vice President of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, called to order its 63rd annual meeting. His report as treasurer showed an increase in its financial assets, and the report by Mrs. J. M. Arms Sheldon as curator announced the receipt of the bequest, by Lewis W. Sears of Charlemont, of a large number of historical pictures, and the completion of her labors upon the Solon L. Newton collection of pewter. The *officers* elected were those who served during 1932.

Mrs. Estella Lamb, a beloved neighbor of Mrs. Sheldon, died suddenly soon after the 1932 meeting; and at Mrs. Sheldon's request Vice President Thompson presented a tribute to Mrs. Lamb and another paper which records the Colrain ancestors of Mrs. Lamb's father and of his own father, the late Judge Francis M. Thompson.

Mrs. Anne J. Biddle gave an account of the "Early History of Westminster", Vermont, her former home; and Mrs. Herbert L. Childs read an interesting paper on the fords, ferries, canals and old bridges of Deerfield. Mrs. Sheldon, Rev. Mr. Luther, Rev. Mr. Vincent, Mrs. Fuller, Mrs. Allen, Miss Miller, Miss Minnie Hawks and Judge F. N. Thompson took part in the discussion at the close of the afternoon meeting. The death of W. Frank Mattson of Boston, during 1932, was announced. He was born in Philadelphia 68 years ago. He joined this Association in 1920 and was a member of the Appalachian Mountain and Twentieth Century clubs.

The evening meeting, at which Judge Thompson presided, followed a complete demonstration of the ability of Deerfield cooks and was made more enjoyable by the Academy Glee Club under the direction of Mr. Ralph Oatley. Reverend C. F. Luther of Amherst, who has recently published an illustrated book which seems to contain the last word on the Hadley chest, spoke on "John Hawks as a Hadley Chest Maker". A very delightful description of gardens in early Deerfield was given by Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen; and Miss Margaret Miller presented, as no one else could, the "Shops and Industries of Old Deerfield."





## REPORT OF CURATOR

The chief work accomplished the past year has been on the Pewter Collection in the Newton Room. Months have been spent on this subject, and twenty-three writers on pewter have been consulted. With the aid of Miss Frances S. Drenning and Mr. W. Herbert Nichols the Collection has been numbered, described, permanently marked and catalogued. Identification characters have been considered first of all. Unfortunately we do not know the history of a single piece of the pewter, as Mr. Newton was not interested in this phase of the subject. We have part of a communion service but we do not know where or by whom it was used.

The catalogue, which is herewith submitted, will be kept in Memorial Hall for ready reference.

The ebbing tide of travel the past summer has caused a decrease in the number of visitors to Memorial Hall, but 6,211 have enjoyed the Collection. For twelve consecutive years we have had over 2,000 visitors in the month of August; this year there were 1,635.

While only 36 States of our Union are represented by the visitors, the number of foreign lands is surprising. These are: Ireland, Scotland, England, France, Switzerland, Germany, Turkey, Egypt, Syria, India, China, Japan, the Philippines, Hawaiian Islands, Porto Rico, the Bahamas and Tasmania.

Fourteen Schools, 6 Camps and 6 organizations have visited us. (These Miss Mellen will read as they offer much food for thought.)

One hundred and forty-nine contributions have been received, consisting of 17 books, 30 pamphlets, 9 newspapers and 93 miscellaneous articles.

One of these contributions, which the donor received from Judge Francis N. Thompson, is the photograph of Mr. Arthur H. Tucker of Milton. This was taken in the winter time on our East Mountain, overlooking the Old Town.

Mr. Tucker was a life member of this Association, and so vitally interested in its work that it seems as though he must be with us today. For these reasons it is appropriate for his picture to hang in our meeting place — the Council Room.

Another contribution is from Mr. Willard E. Morse of Orange. It consists of fifteen articles, most of which belonged to his grandmother, Sarah G. Brown, wife of Ebenezer Nims of Deerfield. There are 9 pieces of Brown Staffordshire china; also an elaborate and carefully preserved counterpane which is here exhibited.

Mr. Frank H. Metcalf of Holyoke has contributed a framed photograph of Fort Massachusetts as now rebuilt.





A huge Cannon Ball has been contributed by Mrs. B. P. Croft of Greenfield. It was fired by the British at the Battle of Stonington, Conn., August 9 to 12, 1814.

Besides the 149 contributions already mentioned, we received in December, by the Will of Mr. Lewis W. Sears of Charlemont a collection of valuable historical pictures, in which Judge John A. Aiken of Greenfield was deeply interested. There are about 70 pictures and maps relating to the early history of Charlemont, the French and Indian Wars and the Revolution. Mrs. Sears, the widow of the donor, wishes to have these pictures kept together, which certainly should be done.

When the warm Spring weather returns, this Collection will be placed in one of the two rooms in Memorial Hall which have not been opened to the public and a full report will be given at the next annual meeting in 1934.

The assistant, Miss Mellen, has continued her excellent work in taking thoughtful care of the Hall, in helping visitors seeking information on various subjects, and in cataloguing the additions to our library.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON.

Deerfield, Feb. 28, 1933.

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## GETTING INTO AND OUT OF DEERFIELD

*By Mrs. Herbert L. Childs*

I said, "I have been asked to speak at the P. V. M. A. meeting on 'Fords and Ferries.'" Another said, "What has the P.V.M.A. to do with Fairies and Fords?"

After all, are fords and fairies so far off in reality from fords and ferries, each a way of transportation? How would the early pioneers, your ancestors and mine, have traversed the plains, crossed rivers and set up dwellings, with streams between the big house and the corn field and milk house, without the ford?

And Fairies — they surely transported us in childhood from prosaic lessons and tasks to the luminous land of make-believe. And was not the Magic Carpet of Bagdad a blazing forerunner of the latest and maybe tomorrow's speed-record-breaking car or airplane; as was the tin horn summoning the boatman, according to the law, the progenitor of the honk of the speeding car. There is really nothing new under the sun—only progression.





Hark back to the narrow path, made by foot in front of foot, of the Indian Trail, making so deep a rut in the soil and even the rock that it has been the basic map of future great roads, as one was found by a boy 50 years ago on Pocumtuck mountain, lying there between fern and brush like a sign and signal of man's indomitable footsteps.

Only last month a gentleman here visiting, one of an inquiring turn of mind and eye, discovered an old Indian Trail near Stillwater Bridge, the trail the hostile Indians wore into the soil coming down from the North to a ford at Stillwater.

Our forefathers breaking into the wilderness, came at last to the river. But how to cross? No sturdy bridges or lace-work of iron and steel swung over the still or rushing stream. But the Indian had been there before him, skilled and untiring in his search for and use of every weakness and meandering of river and stream, and here or there was some formation of rock or gravel where the river had spread and lost its depth. And here was one stone and there another, and stepping stones were found and a crossing formed for man's feet.

Then came the horse dappling through the water, finding with wise hoof firm spots for a safe passage for his rider. It needs no imagination to see the ox-cart and covered wagon that followed and, at long last, we can imagine the joy of the weary passenger on the Albany Coach, when he heard the rumble and scrunch of the wheels through the ripple and rush of the Albany Road Ford, knowing that soon the cheer and warmth of Frary or Barnard Tavern awaited him.

The road to Albany ran down Hitchcock Lane to the ford across the Deerfield River at Old Fort.

I remember when I came on a visit to Deerfield, forty-two years ago, the guideboard nailed to the old corner store, home then of Robert Childs, with the finger pointing down the lane. "To Albany", it read. It was only removed when the recent fords, in their haste to get somewhere else, took their way to the perilous ford that led nowhere.

As this sketch map, based on the state surveys of 1794 and 1830, shows, Deerfield was and is uniquely placed, almost like a peninsular, on three sides surrounded by water; on the north and west by the Deerfield River, on the east by the Connecticut.

And so the entrance and exit to the town and its environs, the fords and ferries in the early days, played an important part, hardly to be realized, with our modern swift movement in mechanized vehicles over bridges, conduits etc.

West Deerfield is entirely cut off on the east and south by the Deerfield River, and in early times there were many fords of a "seasonable character" as the river dashed high in the spring,





spreading out later in shallows covering the meadows and sometimes in freshets coming up over the Street.

You all remember the flood of November 8-12, 1927 when the river rose and rose and spread and spread, over the south meadows to the Wapping road, making the underpass impassable except for boats; while at the north end, the meadows were a great lake, the road from Greenfield flooded all the way down to the Mrs. G. Cochrane Smith place. E. Russell Cowles was entirely awash, and the waters crept up from the west to the back door of Mrs. Ada Brown.

We were surely then an island. How thrilling when a canoe, and then a motor boat came over the meadows from Greenfield, to bring — if necessary — food and succor to the inhabitants. Have we not a seasonable river?

### THE RIVER

The bed of the Deerfield River in 1670 was probably about as far west as the present channel. The river has cut its capricious way back and forth across these meadows, but since 1869 has remained about where we now find it.

The Hatfield road originally ran to the river and along its bank, across the present Log Meadows, thus the ford, which led to the western hills at Martin's Falls, to Stebbins meadow and the Bars, Long Hill to the Main settlement.

Other fords were: Pine Hill, west of Judith Point, Wire Bridge leading to Osgoods and Fred Wynne's in the Old World.

There were two from the South End of the street, one directly back of the homestead now owned and lived in by Herbert L. Childs, one across the river at Horatio Hoyt's land to meet the road running to Chapman's in Wisdom.

### CANALS

Dealing with the two rivers as chief means of getting into and out of Deerfield, it was natural that thought of canals came to the minds of the inhabitants. This thought was in the air. All Massachusetts went mad about canals in the late 1700's and early 1800's, which shows that ferries do lead to fairies, for certainly the idea of building a canal from Deerfield to Albany was a pure fairy tale. Yet it was gravely projected and a commission was appointed by the town inhabitants to build a wharf and purchase lands necessary for a road at the foot of Eagle Brook Hill.

Besides going to Albany it was necessary to get to Boston by water, and Deerfield was much interested in the idea of crossing the Connecticut at Montague on the canal that was to lead through Millers Falls, due east to the Hub. For this purpose





the Proprietors of Locks and Canals Corporation was a subject of much agitation for a good many years. This company was a magnificent creation on paper and issued certificates of shares, printed on thick paper, bearing the seal adopted by the company. This seal bore a design showing a lock and the wheel which closed and opened it, with a boat in the act of being raised in the lock.

The fairy tale did not come true.

There was anxious inquiry as late as June 1825 about the dividends on the stock and whether the company was in debt and what about gross receipts of tolls and rents.

There were no "tolls or rents" but all Deerfield received and kept was the name which was given to the N. Y. N. H. & H. Railroad, called locally "The Canal Road", which substituted land travel for water.

### FERRIES

In addition to fords, ferries were established for more important transportation of horses, cattle and goods. Scows and canoes were provided for river use.

"In 1740 there were two roads to Greenfield, one down the lane by the old burying yard across the Pocumtuck River, now called the Deerfield, at the old Ford, Old River, Little Hope to Green River farms."

The other was from the north end of the street, across Great Plains east of Pine Hill crossing the river through Cheapside. The river at this point was not fordable. A scow was used for teams and a canoe for footmen was kept here at the expense of the town.

Ferries were so essential a part of the needs of the colonists that a law was enacted by General Court, governing their use;—"A Ferry is a place where boats ply regularly across a river or stream for the conveyance of persons or goods across a particular river, and, exacting a reasonable toll for the service, belongs, like the right of Fair and Market, to the class of rights known as Franchise. Its origin must be by statute, royal grant or prescription. It is wholly unconnected with the ownership of the land, so that the owner of a Ferry need not be proprietor of the soil on either side of the water over which the right is exercised. He is bound to maintain suitable boats, ready for the use of the public, and to employ fit persons as ferrymen.

"In 1758 the matter of a regular ferry for Deerfield was agitated and by order of the Court of General Sessions was directed at this time, to keep and maintain a ferry over Deerfield River between Deerfield and Greenfield. A lot of land was bought west of the County Road."





This was the "Old Ferry Lot", held by the town until it was exchanged for a gravel pit in 1895. On this lot a house was built for the ferryman 18 by 20 feet with a stone cellar under or near one side of it.

In 1895 a clump of house lillies still marked the site of this house on the north-east corner of Pine Hill.

The main need of this ferry was to allow convenient access to the Town Lands at the mouth of the Green River. By sudden freshets in the river and through the carelessness of men, boats were often carried away, to be utterly lost, or recovered from below at some expense.

Stringent legislation to "seize them withall", also strong chains were provided for their safe keep at their moorings.

To show the difficulties of establishing a ferry at this time let me read you the following petition:

"Know all men by these presents that Mr. Lucius Tuttle and Benjamin Cobb, both of Deerfield in the County of Franklin, yeomen, are held and firmly bound to the inhabitants of the Town of Deerfield in the sum of one hundred dollars, to be paid to the said Town of Deerfield; to which payment well and truly to be made we bind ourselves our heirs executors and administrators firmly by these presents. Sealed with our Seal the eighth day of March A.D. 1821.

The condition of this obligation is such that whereas application has been made to the Court of Sessions to have a ferry established across the Connecticut River between the towns of said Deerfield and Montague near the home of Lucius Tuttle. Now therefore if the said ferry shall be established and the said Lucius shall be licensed to keep the same and if the said towns of Deerfield and Montague shall provide, at their own expense, a new boat of sufficient size, form and goodness to be used at said ferry for all the purposes of the said ferry to be established in the present term of the said court aforesaid. And if the said Lucius and Benjamin shall indemnify and save harmless the said town of Deerfield from all expense for about for and during the term of ten years from this date and shall provide a suitable person to keep said ferry for the said term of ten years, unless the said ferry shall within that time be discontinued—in which case the said Lucius and Benjamin shall deliver it to the Selectmen of said towns of Deerfield and Montague as their joint property — then this obligation to be void, otherwise in full force and virtue.

In presence of us

George Grinell, Jr.

Jonas Bridges

Lucius Tuttle

Benjamin Cobb"





This is well shown by a petition to the "Honorable Justices of the Court of the General Sessions of the Peace to be holden at Springfield on the third Tuesday of Jan. A.D. 1792."

The inhabitants of Shelburne, Deerfield and Greenfield want the road from Shelburne to Greenfield "over an exceeding high and bad hill" changed to the valley and the county road from Mr. John Bull's farm to Deerfield which "is over the same bad hills and no ferry can be kept thereon owing to the great width that the river flows when the waters are high and forming an island on part of said Road" be changed to across Petty's place to the head of Sutcliff's Falls, so called, and thence across Deerfield River by a ferry—which will greatly relieve the burthen of travel from Deerfield to Shelburne.

This was followed by a further petition to the Selectmen, signed by twelve men, to change the road from Deerfield to Cobb's ferry "in consequence of the bend in the road on Caleb R. Clapp's land"—to change it to "run from the top of Horton Brook Hill upon the South line of said Clapp's land until it meets the present road."

The Town Fathers were thrifty and canny. It was voted on May 13, 1774 that "The Town will build a house at the end of Hitchcock Lane near the burying yard for a tradesman to keep a Ferry near Harrow Meadow, said house to be of the contents of 32 feet in length, 18 in breadth, one story high."

It does not appear how long a ferry was kept up here, but in 1780 the ferry house was devoted to the use of the poor of the town.

By 1769 there were listed Brooks Ferry, Oakes Ferry and Farrand Ferry, which cannot now be located, being at the mercy of the river's will.

Wells Ferry, afterwards called Whitmore Ferry, was in use and appropriations made for it until 1928, as the item in the town report shows: For Whitmore Ferry, half a wire and half a boat, \$59.

The Town Report gives the cost of running a ferry in 1901 as \$250.00.

Later reports give appropriations:—half a boat and wire at Whitmore Ferry, \$50.00, paid M. W. Potter running Whitmore Ferry, \$75.00.

These appropriations with little variation run through the annual Town Reports up to about 1928-29.

One by one ferries were abandoned as handsome and substantial bridges replaced them—Cheapside, Stillwater, Sunderland.





## BRIDGES

But Bridges were a reality for the river had still to be dealt with. There were small wooden bridges over small streams and some quite impressive stone bridges over a stream back of Hitchcock House and Judge Ball's, in Harrow Meadow.

In 1816 the town ordered one built twenty-two feet broad with sufficient water course in the hollow near the house of John Williams; one about forty rods from the Connecticut River Bridge, one a little west of George Fiske's bake house.

The charter to build Cheapside Bridge at the ferry place was granted June 22, 1797, at a cost of \$5,000.

And so we reach the building of Deerfield's first important bridge; a venture that had its difficulties.

In Feb. 1860 it was voted to build a bridge at Stillwater. A town committee was appointed and it followed a natural course by quarrelling with the County Commissioners for two years.

In 1863 the bridge and a connecting road were actually built at a cost of \$7,229.67 which the town promptly refused to pay.

The County Commissioners finally proposed, "if the town would pay in cash in one week from date the sum of \$5,229.67" they would settle the matter. This the town agreed to do and borrowed the money.

In the early spring of 1866 the River came up, the ice jammed, the bridge sagged. The town appointed a committee to see to the safety of the bridge. The committee advised taking the bridge down and building a new one.

Nothing was done: the matter was left to the river. It promptly rose in October during a great flood and heavy rain of many days and carried away the bridge. To remove the wreck the town paid \$995.00.

The present Stillwater bridge was built at a cost of \$3,775.00, the road through Wisdom to Shelburne for \$2,000.00 and the cost of both bridges, roads and lawyers' fees amounted to \$21,724.84.

Sunderland Bridge was the latest of the bridges. The first, built in 1868 met with disaster and it was necessary to return to a ferry again across the Connecticut in the interval before the new structure was built. This was to be a toll bridge but the Sunderland people objected and petitioned to have the charge abolished, a proposal Deerfield fought — with sound and fury, but apparently Sunderland was not for long a toll bridge.

And so we get into and out of Deerfield but —

THE COVERED BRIDGE IS GONE.





## JOHN HAWKS AS A HADLEY CHEST MAKER

*By Rev. Clair F. Luther*

I propose to adventure with you tonight into the field of speculation, although our flights will be not altogether those of fancy pure and unalloyed; but taking off from the solid ground of well-known and accredited facts, we may at least keep ourselves within reach of a safe landing-place. And it is through no haunting attachment to the homiletic method that I am dividing our topic into two parts. This is, indeed, one less than the historic division of "all Gaul", standard from the time of Caesar and in the present enterprise, appears to be a matter of necessity. In making this division I venture to express the hope that the first part may not be without relevancy to the second.

It is recorded of the Rev. William Jay, reformer and jurist, that he once made an address before the Bible Society of Bath, Maine. Not long afterward he was waited upon by a committee from the society who requested for publication "so much of the speech as related to the matter in hand". From which it appears that what our modern psychologists are designating as 'correlation' and 'integration' were not too common even among the reformers.

No one, so far as I know, has ever attributed to Serj. John Hawks the activity of a maker of Hadley chests. The title which attaches to his name reflects rather, a military career, howbeit, a modest and probably brief one. Campaigning was a stern necessity in those days, and one who had been in the Falls Fight, who had passed through the horror of the Massacre and paid tribute to the fury of the destroyer in the loss of six members of his immediate family, wore with distinction the military title which proclaimed connection with those epochal events in the life of the settlement.

The military tradition persisted in the family and another JOHN continued the activity a half-century later, in the command of the garrison at Fort Massachusetts.

But campaigns come to an end and the intervals between have to be filled in with less spectacular occupations, the activities connected with the ever-present bread-and-butter question. It is my purpose to fix upon Serj. JOHN HAWKS the activity of being a maker of Hadley chests, not the only one, to be sure, but so far as the arrow points, the only one in this community. And this endeavor demands some degree of explanation which may properly constitute the first of our two divisions.





The investigation I had been making into the subject of the Hadley Chest, led inevitably to the query: Who built them? In the early stages of that investigation I was not familiar with the literature relating to the subject, a literature painfully scant at best, and scarcely more than scratching the surface. But certain conclusions were beyond question. The maker or makers, must of necessity have been residents of this section where the chests were found. They must have been cabinet makers, 'joyners' in the parlance of the day; must have flourished within certain very definite limits; must have had acquaintance with the product of the Hartford 'joyners' chief among them Nicholas Disbrowe, known builder of several superior examples of early American joinery and in short, must have met conditions imposed by the very nature of the case.

It seemed to me in the absence of any definite information that John Hawks met these conditions perfectly, and with this intuition, I think I may call it, wrote to Mr. Luke Vincent Lockwood, author of "*Colonial Furniture in America*" and acknowledged authority in early Americana, setting forth my arguments and conclusions, based on little more than intuition or assumption. His reply was to direct my attention to the latest edition of his book, at that time just off the press, and thus accounting for my ignorance of his position.

While admitting the cogency of my arguments, he nevertheless adhered to the position he had taken in the second edition of his book, namely, that the firm of BELDING & ALLIS of Hatfield, consisting of Samuel Belding and Ichabod Allis, were the makers of the Hadley chests found in this vicinity. These men sustained numerous direct and indirect family relationships with each other which need not be here enumerated, although they form a most interesting and complicated puzzle in genealogy and invest the partnership with considerably more than a mere business connection. Moving under this guidance I sought for confirmation of Mr. Lockwood's theory, and came to accept his position.

The evidences that the Allis family, or to include both members of the firm, that Samuel Belding and Ichabod Allis were builders of these rare early American pieces, appear to me to be both cumulative and convincing. To mention only a few of them:—(a) there are ten Hadley chests that either bear the final initial "A" for ALLIS, or have initials of girls who married into the Allis family; (b) the entire output of Hadley chests falls within the limits of the life of Ichabod Allis, the earlier ones doubtless constructed by the father JOHN ALLIS, the series ending with the death of Ichabod in 1747; (c) and what amounts almost to a signature, a chest with an inscription affixed,





stating that it was made for Lydia, his daughter, the inscription however, being of a much later date manifestly.

These are but a few of the arguments adduced to support the theory, and I mention them for the reason that the same line of argument applies with equal or greater force in the undertaking we now have in hand.

It is a misfortune that these modest craftsmen thought so little of themselves, that not a single mark or signature to indicate authorship has been discovered on any one of their productions. The initials of the girl for whom the chest was made, or of the bride whose dowry it was to be, are conspicuous, and as in the case of the several A's I have mentioned in the Allis family, furnish undoubted contributory evidence, but not a single mark to indicate the maker has been discovered, with one notable exception. The single exception to this rule of silence is in the case of the Mary Allyn chest, owned by Mr. Lockwood, on one of the drawers of which appears the inscription in 17th century script:

MARY ALLYNS CHISTT CUTT AND JOYNED  
BY NICH: DISBROWE

This particular piece has an interesting history into which we may not now enter, but the inscription appears definitely to attach the construction to the Hartford master craftsman, Nicholas Disbrowe. Although Mr. Penrose Hoopes has advanced the theory that the inscription was affixed by John Allyn, Deputy Governor, father of the favored Mary, since he thinks he has discovered evidence that Disbrowe could neither read nor write. Even so the conclusion is not invalidated, and the inscription stands as a veritable signature, the only one of its kind thus far discovered. Nor does the matter of identification proceed with much haste until the custom of printed labels came in, late in the 19th century, a merry tempest in a teapot having recently arisen around so famous an artist as McIntire of Salem with his unrivaled carvings.

Thus it is that in the absence of any definite signature we are thrown upon the somewhat cold and cheerless processes of inductive logic. How rewarding they may be the event will prove. As I have said, in the situation thus outlined, I hazarded a guess as one shooting an arrow into the air, that Serj. John Hawks had been a builder of Hadley chests.

I am glad of the opportunity here and now to return to the defense of that original position, and all the more so in this presence where the spirit of the old Serjeant may walk abroad, or where at any rate, the weak spot in the armor may be detected by the living, and either the argument refuted or the conclusion supported.





With this by way of introduction comprising our first line of attack, we may then proceed to the actual enterprise in hand, marshalling the supporting arguments and considerations to bear upon what I am jealous to believe is an entirely original conception, and which I trust may not be an ugly duckling among the very valuable and interesting publications to which this Association stands sponsor.

1. It would not be an absolute necessity, of course, to search for other makers than the two or three already mentioned on the ground that their span of life was too short and the number of chests too great to have been constructed by one firm. The actual number of carved chests so far as I have been able to list them, is almost exactly an even hundred. Allowing for those destroyed by fire and other hazard and counting several plain pieces bearing all the ear-marks of the Hadleys except the carving, the number may possibly have reached one hundred and fifty. It would have been entirely possible for one man even, to have constructed so many during the course of an ordinary life without working over-time. The inducement to look for other builders does not arise from any such necessity. It is in fact, a commonplace that many 'joyners' up and down the Valley did actually produce the chests, from Deerfield on the north to Coventry, Conn. on the south, each employing the characteristic tulip and leaf design, and at the same time giving some individual touch to his fabrication. We are therefore quite within bounds in looking for a builder in Deerfield where so many of the pieces have been found and still remain.

2. The next step in the proceeding is to look for a suitable candidate in this place and during the time limits set by the pieces themselves. That candidate I find in Serj. JOHN HAWKS and we may examine some of the facts and incidents in his life to discover whether they dovetail into the requirements as already set forth. The main features may be assumed to be fairly familiar to this audience, but I shall presume to rehearse them with reference to the matter in hand. For oftentimes incidents are lightly passed over which seem to have no significance until related to a definite but not entirely apparent, purpose. In fact reading history, like reading a poem or oration, is largely a matter of proper emphasis.

Serj. John was born in 1643, the son of John Hawks or Hake, of Windsor. With his parents and other members of the family he came to Hadley about 1660, locating on the west side of the river in the division which later became Hatfield. Thus for the first seventeen years of his life, during which time he must have been serving his apprenticeship and learning his trade, he





lived in the town adjoining Hartford where Nicholas Disbrowe was exactly in his prime and making some of the pieces that have come down to us. There is no evidence to be sure, that young John served under Disbrowe, but being of the same craft he could have scarcely have been ignorant of the work of that master, whose influence undoubtedly dominated not only the shire town but the surrounding settlements as well. Inter-course between Hartford and Windsor was frequent and intimate, and it imposes no tax upon the imagination to believe that the boy of seventeen, learning carpentry and joinery, must have known at least, of the work of Disbrowe.

In Hatfield where John remained for a dozen years or more, he was next door neighbor to the Allis family, or families, for there were several of them. It is not a part of this discussion to enter upon the field of John Hawks' military career, interesting as that might be. The item of chief import is that he was a carpenter and joiner, that is, cabinet maker. The first is an accepted fact and I shall hope to demonstrate the latter as a corollary of the former. John Hawks was among the earliest settlers evidently casting in his lot with the Dedham proprietors at the opening of the tract. After the first assault and massacre of King Philip's War and the abandonment of the settlement, he had gone back to Connecticut for a time, but was among the first to return hither and undertake the re-construction of this town, perhaps about 1680. In 1686 the town called John Williams to the pastorate of the church and voted for his "Incouragement" a house, to be 42 feet long, 20 feet wide with a "lento" on the back side. And here we come upon the first sure marks of John Hawks' activity as a carpenter, the reference being in Mr. Sheldon's story of the Heredity and Early Environment of John Williams. I quote Mr. Sheldon's words (p.147).

"The work must be done under the direction of the Selectmen, John Sheldon, William Smead, etc. - - - What a stir and excitement among the people when the preparation for this enterprise began - - Breakfast by the light of the blazing pine knots and a prompt gathering on the common. With what zeal and energy John Stebbins and JOHN HAWKS, the carpenters, led the woodmen up the steep side of the East Mountain."

Exactly ten years later, 1696, John Hawks was on the committee to build the meeting-house, which stood yonder on the common a few rods north of the monument. It is certain that he was not only on the committee, but that he himself worked on the construction since the contract to finish the building was awarded to him. This item must not be passed





over indifferently, for much is wrapped up in that expression "to finish the building." This includes of course the finer work, the making of the pews, the paneling the ornamentation of the interior with fret-work and scrolls if any, and the construction of the pulpit, ever the principal object of attention.

It was at exactly this time that Samuel Belding and Ichabod Allis, building the meeting-house at Hatfield were given orders by vote of the town "to enlarge the pulpit and make it uniform." What this latter item of instruction may imply, is uncertain, but we may safely conclude that it has no reference to doctrine, since uniformity therein was of the very essence of religion.

In respect of this meeting-house built here on the common in 1696, Gen. Epaphras Hoyt in his account of the settlement, written in 1833, speaks of it as a "small log church." Far be it from me to dispute the statement made exactly 100 years ago, and by that token so much nearer the original sources, but the assumption seems to me unlikely, in view of the pretentious manse erected for the minister ten years earlier, and the presence on both sides of the common of framed houses, clap-boarded and paneled within. Certainly none of the neighboring meeting-houses were log houses, and with the genuine artistic taste of the settlers, the pride in the meeting-house, and the really fine mansions near at hand, I find it difficult to believe the house was of logs.

The chief contribution derived from this contract with Serj. John to "finish the meeting-house," is that it establishes him as a carpenter skilled in the finer parts of his craft, a joiner or cabinet maker. And John Hawks was of course, the builder of his own house almost directly opposite the end of the street, a few rods to the south-east of Parson Williams' manse, that smaller house which became a fire trap for those who took refuge in the cellar during the Massacre.

It was the impoverished condition of the town that delayed payment of the bill incurred in the construction of the meeting-house and the final claim for work was not paid until ten years after the Massacre, in 1714 by a draft on the town lands at Mill River for twenty acres of land. Whether this final settlement was made after he went to live with his daughter Hannah Scott, in Waterbury, or whether he continued to live here until he secured the settlement will probably never be known. He was living in Connecticut in 1721, at that time seventy-eight years old.

It should be mentioned that for his second wife, Serj. John married Alice Allis, widow of Samuel who died in the 'great sickness' of 1691. This marriage occurred in 1696, twenty years after the death of his first wife, Martha Baldwin. The





connection with the Allis family begun in the first years of his residence in Hatfield, was thus continued and cemented more closely by this second marriage.

3. All of this seems like a good deal of preliminary skirmishing before we come at actual grips with the proposition in hand. But in the establishment of an hypothesis as a demonstrated fact, no single item is negligible or unimportant. And it was indeed, necessary thus to set forth the conditions and the points of agreement before we could intelligently come at the testimony of the chests themselves. For it is these that must furnish the conclusive demonstration if one is to be had. Such a demonstration could only be projected upon exactly such a background as we have been constructing. And with this we may pass to the direct evidence supplied by the chests themselves. Is there anything to connect the name of John Hawks with any of the chests or to suggest that he may have been the builder? Let us first of all examine the chests that unquestionably sustain a relation to the Hawks family.

Most conspicuous of all is the exceedingly rare three-drawer chest in Memorial Hall acquired many years ago and described as a part of the "outfit of Sarah Hawks" and bearing her initials S. H. Sarah was the daughter of Serj. John's brother Eliezer, born in 1701, married to Dr. Thomas Wells in 1726. It is interesting to note that in the inventory of the estate of Thomas Wells taken on the 1st day of August, 1744, this chest is appraised at 160£, indicating among other things what is well known, that property rights inhered in the male sex, and further that this must have been a period of inflated currency, inasmuch as other inventories commonly place an appraisal value of about two pounds (£2) upon similar pieces, often much less.

This uncertainty of money values is reflected in a vote passed by the town of Framingham on November 10, 1755, in calling Rev. David Kellogg to the pastorate, to pay him four dollars a day, "to be as good as money was five years ago." No age or place stands alone in seeing values slip away from what are euphemistically called 'securities'.

Inventory of Estate of EZEKIEL HOLYMAN, Warwick, R. I.  
taken 1659—

To one great chest	0—8—0
To man sarvant Jo	0—9—0

Estate of GRAFTON FEVERYEARE, Newburyport  
taken March 21, 1771—

1 Negro man, Gregory, about 80 years of age, estimated nothing.





With this brief digression from our main line we may return to the date of Sarah Hawks' marriage, 1726, subsequent to Serj. John's removal to Waterbury and perhaps even subsequent to his death. And if the chest were to be considered as a part of her marriage outfit—the description omits the word 'marriage'—it could not possibly have come from the hand of her uncle John Hawks. But extended investigation indicates that only in very rare instances were these chests a part of the marriage dowry—that is, made for the occasion—but were actually made for girls of tender age. Mr. Malcolm A. Norton somewhere states that they were made for children of two or three years, and this is confirmed by the first Lydia Allis chest, this Lydia having died in 1691 at the age of eleven. Sarah Hawks was three years old at the time of the Massacre and sometime between the date of her birth in 1701 and the Massacre in 1704 which practically put an end to all activity for many years, her uncle may have constructed this rare three-drawer Hadley chest. Or it might even be that the chest was built subsequent to the Massacre, sometime during those ten years in which Serj. John was awaiting settlement of the bill for his work on the meeting-house. So far as time is concerned there is no restriction that would rule him out of consideration, provided there is any adequate ground for assuming him to have been the builder beyond the basic fact that John Hawks was a carpenter and joiner, and that his niece Sarah was the owner of the chest. Standing upon this support alone, it must be confessed that evidence in confirmation of our premise is scant indeed.

But it is of the nature of our hypothesis that evidence is inter-dependent and cumulative, and, as in court proceedings counsel is said to forge a chain of evidence, each item linked to a preceding part, so here, while no single item supplies convincing and final proof, the continuity and cumulation of evidence does indeed, lead to practical demonstration.

4. We come then to still another major consideration, which, taken in connection with the one we have just discussed, advances the proposition by another stage. When the catalogue of the relics housed in Memorial Hall was compiled and printed, the S H chest we have just been considering was described as the *only* three-drawer chest known. That was literally true, for its companion, or twin, perhaps we might say, thus definitely fixing the number, was reposing modestly and obscurely in a most unpretentious home a hundred and fifty miles to the north, quite unknown indeed, and quite unaware of its own importance or value. The story of its discovery reads like a romance and would add that touch of romantic interest to our present effort, were it not too extended and too remote





from the main point. Suffice it to say that another three-drawer chest identical in every essential feature with the Sarah Hawks chest is in existence, and may I add, splendidly housed in one of the magnificent mansions of a Boston suburb.

It bears the initials T S and at once our thoughts leap across the span of the centuries in the attempt to identify the original owner for whom these initials stood. Two claimants present themselves, one Thankful Sheldon, born in 1698, of Northampton, whom we instantly reject in favor of another Thankful, Thankful Smead, born in 1677 and marrying in or about 1695, none other than JOHN HAWKS, son of our Serj. John. The plot thickens! Here is the elder John, a widower of nineteen years, about to welcome to his home a daughter who might become a home-maker for himself as well as for his son, probably not anticipating that he himself would take a help-meet the very next year, and certainly not anticipating that both women, the son and the children that should be born, were to perish miserably in the cellar of the house where both families lived in that tragic end of February eight years later.

Is it not something far more than coincidence that these two three-drawer chests—the only ones—should link up closely with John Hawks, and is it not an imperative that we identify the owner of this second three-drawer piece as Thankful Smead, the wife of the younger John Hawks, and the father, carpenter and joiner, as the builder? And here again, standing alone, this second bit of evidence is fragmentary, incomplete, indefinite. But taken in connection with the former, the chain of evidence is growing and throwing a heavier burden of proof on any dissenting opinion.

5. It would seem unavoidable with two chests of such marked individuality, one of them located definitely in the Hawks family, the other meeting every requirement that could possibly be imposed, that they should be classed in the same category. If our conclusion is correct, the marriage in 1695 would place the T S chest as the earlier and lend weight to the supposition that the Sarah Hawks chest might have been made in the early years 1701-4, when Sarah, the niece, was in her infancy, as was suggested.

I pause a moment before leaving these two three-drawer pieces to note an observation made by Dr. Lyon in his "Colonial Furniture of New England," quite irrelevant to the discussion but interesting as showing the primitive stage in which the matter was at the time of publication, 1891. Dr. Lyon in commenting upon the S H chest classes it as a 'hybrid'. This was certainly with no intent of disparagement. He had been speaking of the increase in the number of drawers, eventuating ultimately in the chest-on-chest. The possession of three





drawers seemed to indicate the approaching change, and so he spoke of it as a hybrid. As a matter of fact, these pieces antedate the chest-on-chest by a full half century or more, and have of course, no relation to the later structure. They comprise the rarest type of the Simon-pure Hadley chest, and if our argument is at all plausible, some of the very earliest.

6. From these two pieces so clearly in the immediate family of Serj. John, we may go on to consider less direct evidence, but evidence which hangs in mid-air unless our hypothesis is correct, to which the hypothesis gives substantial footing. In the same room here in Memorial Hall is another two-drawer Hadley chest, stained red and initialed W A. This piece presents an interesting and unusual problem.

Was it indeed, made for William Arms as the catalogue states? If so, this would be the sole instance of a chest constructed for a boy, although we have six examples of chests with three initials, for both bride and groom. These were very evidently dowry or marriage chests, made possible as wedding presents.

(R E B, I E N, I S M, D H E, N D M, W M G)

There is every reason indeed, to accept the tradition that this chest was made for William Arms, but not for the first of the family in America. That William Arms probably did arrive in the Colony not far from 1676 and for our present purpose his chief interest for us is that he married JOANNA HAWKS in 1677. Joanna was the sister of Serj. John. Two sons named for the father were born of this marriage, the first in 1678, dying in 1690 at the age of twelve; the second born in 1692. It was a very common custom for parents to name a child for an older one who had died, sometimes as many as three bearing the same name. Now this period of the two William Arms, nephews of Serj. John was exactly the period of his activity as a carpenter and builder.

There is nothing inherently impossible or improbable in the supposition that he did make this chest for one of his nephews bearing the name William Arms. Add to this the fact that an exhaustive search of the records reveals no girl with the initials W A, and the persistent tradition that it was made for William Arms, our case is advanced still another stage toward certainty.

7. The contribution made by still another chest, one of those with three initials, is perhaps not so direct or so weighty as in the instances cited, but is nevertheless worthy of consideration. I refer to the chest initialed I E N, now owned by Mr. Wesley G. Humes of Greenfield, the initials standing for John and Elizabeth Nims.

Here again the arrow points unmistakably to Serj. John Hawks although it must be said that family relationship was





not established until the next generation. John Nims was the son of Godfrey, the "cordwainer", ancestor of all of that name in America, as the history states. Tragic chapters followed one another with fearful regularity in the family story, from the burning of the Nims house in 1693-4 in which a step-son perished, to the second more tragic conflagration on that fateful morning in 1704 when three of the children were lost and the family nearly exterminated. John Nims was born in 1679. Upon the death of his first wife, Godfrey Nims, the father, had married in 1692 Mehitable *Smead* Hull, who brought with her into the Nims home, her daughter Elizabeth, aged three and one-half.

John was a boy of thirteen at the time of this marriage, and together the son and the little step-daughter grew up in the home, being themselves finally joined in marriage on December 19, 1707. But more tragedy had preceded this union, for John was taken captive in 1703 and Elizabeth Hull in 1704; John Nims, then twenty-five, escaped and Elizabeth Hull was later ransomed and returned. The story has all the elements of tragedy and romance combined. The marriage was performed by Mr. Williams. Who knows but it may have been the first marriage ceremony taking place in the brand new parsonage just erected for the "Redeemed Captive"?

A daughter of this union, Elizabeth Nims was born March 1, 1712, and married on December 10, 1730 to John Hawks, son of Eliezer and nephew of Serj. John, although it must be presumed that the uncle was not then alive to know of the event.

While the chest was for the father and mother, and from the fact that the initials of both appear, evidently constructed at the time of the marriage in 1707, this later alliance shows that intimate relationship existed between the Nims and the Hawks families.

8. Yet one other Hadley chest carved in conventional design, having one drawer only, can be traced to the immediate family of John Hawks, and presumably to him as the maker. And when I say 'immediate' as subsequent to the Massacre, I mean of course his brother Eliezer's family where as has been intimated, he may have gone to live. This fifth chest is the one made for Abigail Wells and bearing her initials, who in 1714 became the wife of Eliezer, Jr., another nephew of Serj. John. This piece had an uninterrupted sojourn in the Hawks house at Wapping from 1714, the date of the marriage until the fall of 1927 when it passed to another owner, Mr. Herbert Newton, of Holyoke, but a direct descendant of the original owner.

The same method of procedure applies in this instance as in the former. The date is the same as that on which the final claim for work on the meeting-house was settled, 1714, which







may have been just previous to his departure to live with his daughter in Waterbury. Or on his return for a longer or shorter sojourn here. I am indeed, far from claiming this as absolute demonstration, but it does appear to me to embody much of what the jurists designate as 'eminent probability'.

9. It is well known that chests in varying designs and structure have come down to us from this period, and although the name "Hadley" is applied to those only which are carved with the tulip and leaf, many plain chests of like construction but lacking the ornamental carving, are by every token, Hadley chests, and originate in the same place. We may give final consideration to one of these, the only chest with writing of any sort upon it, to my knowledge. This is a plain blanket chest with two drawers belonging to Miss Susan B. Hawks, and thus on the face of it presenting claims to recognition as a production of Serj. John Hawks.

The writing which is on the inside of the lid, was done with chalk, in 18th century script, and is not easily or entirely decipherable. The name LUCY ALLIS appears in large letters with elaborate and wide-circling capitals. Higher up on the lid, in smaller script is seen "... Matton 1 shilling 6 pence" and underneath "Sarah Matton." Now John Hawks' sister Sarah married Philip Mattoon and (2) Daniel Belding. She lived to the great age of ninety-four, seventy-four years after her first marriage. Philip Mattoon and Sarah Hawks had a daughter Sarah, born April 26, 1687, who married Zechariah Field in 1711. This Sarah Mattoon was thus the niece of Serj. John and her period and date of marriage are exactly those of the activity of John Hawks, her uncle, and co-incident with the two chests we have just been viewing.

It may not be too much to suppose that we have here an authentic notation of the maker, and the 1 & six-pence may have been the price of the chest for his niece. The Lucy Allis is not to be accounted for, although it was evidently the name of one of the succession of later owners. But the name Sarah Mattoon definitely allies it with the several other pieces traced so directly to the workshop of John Hawks. In no other instance except that of Ichabod Allis of Hatfield, do the arrows point so unmistakably as to the door of John Hawks, builder of Hadley chests definitely deriving from this very locality.

That there were other carpenters and joiners here, and that they built chests and other articles of household furnishing is not denied. But it seems improbable that with such a skilled crafts-man in the family, so many of the Hawks girls should have gone outside of the family to find a maker for their hope or dowry chests. The evidence is almost as conclusive as an actual signature, that we have in Serj. JOHN HAWKS a





veritable maker of Hadley chests. It is at least reassuring to know that no one can positively *deny* that he did construct them, while the accumulation of such bits of evidence as we have been considering lends presumptive weight to the thesis with which we began, viz. that Serj. JOHN HAWKS was a maker of Hadley chests.

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## SHOPS AND INDUSTRIES IN OLD DEERFIELD

*By Margaret Miller*

From the settlement of our town, hand industries were existent in every household. All of the processes for feeding and clothing the family were cheerfully carried on by the men and women with no thought of its being a hardship. Doubtless there was barter and exchange of the various commodities but it was not until the early eighteenth century that business began to concentrate in shops. About 1740 little shops began to blossom out all up and down this street. They seemed to be mostly small buildings stuck in the front corner of the yard or behind the shed, anywhere it happened. Thinking of the fine old houses that still adorn our street, left over from that period, we cannot feel that the looks of the town were improved by this heterogeneous collection. But they were necessary evils and when their usefulness was over they vanished. Bye and bye as the shoemakers, hatters, tailors, etc. multiplied it became expedient to have a center of trade and a convenient location for this was found on the Albany Road, the only available land not occupied with homes.

This land had been set aside in 1686 for the use of the ministry. It was called the Town Garden and I suppose the ministers had made good use of it. However, the petition to the Legislature in 1759 for leave to sell the property to tradesmen sets forth that "the soil of said lot is poor and Baren & for want of manure is rendered of but little proffit to the minister\*\* Have good opportunity to dispose of sd lot in such a manner as would be greatly to their advantage & the sum of money would be more proffitable than that of the land is."

Exactly how much truth there was in this argument, or how much of it was inspired by these would-be tradesmen, it is difficult at this distance to say but Parson Ashley signified that he was satisfied provided the profits be secured to him during his ministry. So the act was passed and the lot extending from the street, south of the common to the old burying





ground, was divided into nine lots,  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre to a lot. The two lots nearest to the burying ground were not used by industries but if we only had a picture of the Albany Road what a contrast it would make to the Albany Road of the present!

For between 1760 and 1800 it was occupied by a gunsmith, cordwainer, feltmaker, weaver, blacksmith, two shoemakers, hatter and saddler. About where the gymnasium now stands William Russell employed a man named Graves to make coffins. But ready made coffins being an innovation, the enterprise was not successful and was soon given up. Later, on the same spot, a wheelwright named Death set up in business here.

And somewhere down this lane was the Town Pound, occupied in impounding the stray cattle. The venerable elm in front of the old Hitchcock house looked upon very different scenes in the days of its youth. To the eastward it could see the store on the S.E. corner of the Academy lot. This store came there in 1741. I use this expression because it was a cider mill moved there from I-don't-know-where for the purpose of serving the town in another capacity. And serve the town it did for more than a century. Until 1800 it was under the guidance of the Williams family, Capt. Elijah Williams being the institutor of it.

Besides the usual rum and molasses, salt and nails, Capt. Williams fitted out from his stock scouting parties and companies with ammunition, snow shoes etc. during the French and Indian War. Starting out from this place these rough and ready soldiers followed the guide board on the front of the store which pointed "to Albany", down the lane to the ford and so over the hills to the westward. In addition to this business the legal affairs of the town received attention here. Both Capt. Elijah and his son John were Justices of the Peace and an astonishing amount of litigation was disposed of here. Also John Williams acted as Register of Deeds for the northern district of old Hampshire before Franklin County was set off and the county seat established at Greenfield. Also the old elm might have seen on the knoll where the brick church now stands (I understand it was quite a hill then but was graded down for the Meeting House) the small building used by Gen. Epaphras Hoyt who was at one time register of deeds, afterwards High Sheriff. This building was peripatetic, as so many of them were, journeying to the south end of the street and later down on to the Wapping road. Also the elm would have seen the familiar outlines of the old "Indian House", so called, at that time a famous Tory tavern where David Hoyt, the landlord, made "wigs and foretops."

If we had gone up and down our street during that half century before 1800 we would have found many shops outside





this "shopping district". It was probably necessary that there should be so many shoemakers, cabinet makers, tailors and blacksmiths. For we, who measure everything by machines and electricity, must remember that all these things were accomplished by slow, laborious hand work. A shoemaker in those days got 2s. for making a pair of shoes (they retailed at 6s.) and 2s.6d. for French heels. So our young ladies take after their grandmothers in their fashions as well as in other ways. There was a distinction between cordwainers and shoemakers. The former worked in cordovan or cordwain leather, more suitable for women's wear. The men's boots like those seen in the agricultural corner at Memorial Hall, were probably made by the local shoemaker. One would think after inspecting the specimens there that one pair of boots was all that would be needed for a lifetime, also that men must have been much stronger in those days, just to carry around that weight of leather.

As for the cabinet makers—who knows how many chairs and tables, beds and chests were produced right here on this street? If they had only been thoughtful enough to put their sign manual on these pieces of furniture destined to become precious heirlooms! What kind of watches were made by the watch makers who were listed here? Did the settlers in this remote section join the movement to "Buy American" that was almost a furor at the Hub several years before the Revolution? And what were the pewter buttons like that were made in the same shop on lot 24 (the old Plympton place) where Solomon Ashley cut gravestones? These questions I fear must remain unanswered as these Artisans wrought only for the needs of the moment.

What is now Memorial Lane, but was then only a road to the mountain, was also a busy place. Here we find a malt house, cabinet maker, shoe shop, cooper, and on beyond, where the road turns, a brick yard. In giving this list I have omitted to mention the rope walk on lot 24, the fulling mill on the east end of lot 22, the maker of fanning mills on the terrace west of the south end, the cider mill and distillery where Christopher Arms not only made strong waters but extracts of peppermint, spearmint and wintergreen for the housewives and salt petre for the War of 1812. The blacksmiths not only plied their regular trade but also made hinges and andirons and in their spare moments cut out nails and headed them up by hand. As late as 1808 Geo. P. Field, who tended tollgate at Cheapside, made nails by this primitive method.

We were not wholly a self-supporting community however. There were several stores where commodities brought up from "the Bay" in covered wagons (like the old Prairie schooners)





were retailed. On lot 8 Capt. Thomas Dickinson (father of Consider) had a store somewhere on the south part, 1770-75.

David Field, who lived on lot 35, nearly opposite, built a store, partly on lot 35 and partly on lot 34. This he occupied 1754-85. It was a favorite resort for the Sons of Liberty during the Revolution and a boulder on the street marks the spot where the liberty pole was set up in front of the store. Col. Field, however, was such an ardent patriot being member of the Committee of Correspondence & Safety, delegate to the Provincial Congress at Cambridge and in pecuniary and other ways sacrificing himself for the cause, that his affairs became much involved and one of his creditors obtained a judgment against him in 1787 and his whole estate, consisting of several homesteads and 600 acres of land, passed into other hands. So the success of this mercantile enterprise will have to be measured, not by dollars, but by intangible results.

Ebenezer Barnard kept store and P.O. on the Ware lot 26, 1804 to 1810. About 1812 the S.W. corner room of Frary House became a store and a small building put up in front was used in connection with it. What a fortunate thing it was for the looks of the place that Pliny Arms later moved this structure to the rear and made a kitchen of it!

What interesting and varied things these old prototypes of the Department store held. Not only salt and sugar, rum and molasses, iron and steel, tobacco, salt fish, tea and spices, but there were broadcloths and India cottons and calicoes, more prized than silks; and all the blue Staffordshire china and choice old Lowestoft now amongst our dearest possessions.

About 1800 the store on the Academy lot, where the Williamses had dispensed Justice and tobacco, politics and rum, gossip and calico and other ill-assorted things, passed into the hands of the Ware family where it remained till 1870, really the center of the town life. Here the Social Library, established about 1800, kept its books in a room over the store, and there monthly meetings for the drawing of books were held. Pretty solid reading it was, too, we would think if we took the time to look up the remnants of it (about 800 volumes) now in Memorial Hall.

In the shuffle of real estate which resulted in the Deerfield Academy and Dickinson High School obtaining the corner lot (where it now stands), and the P.V.M.A. taking possession of the old Academy building on Memorial Lane, the ex-cider mill, village emporium after more than a century of usefulness, trundled over to lot 11. (It seems that buildings were almost always moved, never torn down, in Deerfield, with the exception of the old Indian House which, of all others, should have been saved.)





The coming in of the 19th century marked the beginning of the machine age which has done so much for us both for good and ill. The invention of the cotton gin gave the death blow to the flax industry of this region. Some hailed this with joy but I have been told by old people that some men were troubled for fear their women folks would not have enough to do! Whether it was a change for better or worse I cannot say. But we do know that the homespun cloth, both linen and wool, far surpassed, in quality and durability the machine-made article. And it seems a far cry from that day to this one of modern improvements, when our women folks can't even make their own dresses—or bread either!

Of course there was a grist mill and a saw mill from the earliest days on the mill-river about two miles from the south end of the street. When Col. Stebbins and his brother dug the mill drain and established the mill which many remember, about a mile south of the street,—the mill which by vote of the town was to be “free of taxes as long as water runs and grass grows”—this development of power opened the way for many industries. During the first part of the century there were in the little hamlet called “The Mill” a carding mill, fulling mill, shingle mill, clothiers' works, lead pipe works, dye works, machine works and a blacksmith's shop.

The great industry of the town however during the first half of the century was the making of brooms. The meadows were full of the tall waving plumes of the broomcorn and there were at least three shops on the street, the largest being conducted by Baxter Stebbins on lot 11, where the Deerfield Inn now stands. The idle hands of the women, with no spinning to do, were occupied with the plaiting of palm leaf hats. Some agent from a near-by town brought the palm leaf and collected the finished product. Low prices were paid but my! how the fingers flew!

But an important development in the beginning of the 19th century was that of printing. In 1816 Rodolphus Dickinson and John Wilson established a printing and publishing house on lot 17, in a building erected for their use. Rodolphus Dickinson was one of the prominent men of his time. A graduate of Harvard, he was soon after admitted to the bar and was clerk of the courts of Franklin County—1811-1819. He was chiefly known as a writer before 1820, at which date he became an Episcopal minister and went to So. Carolina where he built up two parishes. He wrote many pamphlets on law, history and geography, but his principal works were a Compendium of the Bible, which went through 6 editions, and a New Version of the New Testament (in Addisonian English).





He seems to have supplied most of the material for the press as we hear nothing of its activities after he left the town.

In 1831 the tailors' extension of the Saxton house was occupied by another printing press (or it may have been the same one taken over) and here Gen. Epaphras Hoyt published *The Franklin Freeman*, an Anti-Masonic newspaper. Gen. Hoyt was also a man of fine character who published treatises on military tactics, natural science and (most interesting of all) antiquarian research. Some of them probably came from the press of Dickinson and Wilson, some were left in mss. So we see that in matters of intellect as well as in material ways the town was not behindhand.

When I came to Deerfield in 1893 there were two stores on the street, both of them harking back to older times and methods. Just across the way from the post office stood the little shop of Philo Munn. It is difficult to believe that Strecker's Grocery is the same building that presented such an unassuming appearance 40 years ago. In those days it was turned the other way with its long side toward the road. In the middle of the side was a small door with a small paned window on either side. Above the door a long narrow board extending the length of the building inconspicuously announced that "Shoes, stationery and Yankee Notions" were for sale by Philo Munn. Entering this little door one found a dark room, smelling of leather presided over by a tall spare man, quiet and courteous of demeanor. He looked as if he might be a retired minister but his life had been divided between shoemaking in his younger and shop keeping in his later years. There was no display of goods but it was said that he had "most everything'." I have heard that two men made a wager that they could ask him for something that he hadn't got. So one of them went in and asked him for a goose yoke. Mr. Munn said nothing but disappeared up the stairs into the attic. After rummaging for a while he came down with the desired article. One day a caller made some remark about the weather and to her surprise he quoted at some length some of Emerson's poetry. The first rubber overshoes that were manufactured were thick and heavy, calculated for wear and not for comfort. But Mr. Munn in common with his generation, set durability above every other consideration. So when a customer suggested that she preferred the thinner kind the old man drew himself up with as near an expression of scorn as his mildness could assume and said, "Lighter than vanity!" So naturally that demand was hastily withdrawn.

Promptly at eleven o'clock every day Mr. Munn put on his hat and coat, closed the shop and with a basket on his arm, went to his little house under the railroad embankment where he and





his wife lived alone. He started thus early for Mrs. Munn was an invalid and he must prepare the dinner. It is a fitting end to this story that this gentle old man and his wife died on the same day.

Where our post office now stands was a weather beaten old structure, the Grange building. It had served as a school house at one time, as the front of it bore testimony. Unpainted and battered, the clapboards around the door were carved with many of the well known old Deerfield names. There were two doors in front. The right at one time led into the post office, the left into Miss Ray's store. I need only mention Caroline Ray's name to call up her picture before many of my audience; her sparse, silvery hair, the faded blue eyes, the kindly expression on her face all puckered up with wrinkles, the long black cape and the funny old black straw hat that she habitually wore, her bent shoulders indicative of a life of hard unremitting toil.

It wasn't much of a store that she kept. She hadn't the remotest idea of business methods. Her first venture had been started in the south-east front chamber of the home where she and her three sisters had lived for years. (They say that all the materials for building this house had been earned by these sisters plaiting palm leaf hats—no wonder her shoulders were bowed over and her head poked forward!) Persuaded by a friend, she had moved her store to this more advantageous situation in the center of the town. Here in a desultory way she collected a few things such as thread and buttons, soap and stationery, and passed them out to you with the latest news. For there is no doubt that she was the greatest purveyor of gossip that the town has ever had. One always asked Caroline for the latest word from any sick person. If a man had "hitched up" and taken his family to Greenfield "tradin'" she was aware of it. If a woman in town had a new dress she would screw it out of her, by careful questioning, the store where she bought it and the price paid for it. They say she stopped a funeral procession on its way to Laurel Hill from some nearby town, to ask who was goin' to be buried. There was no malice in this curiosity. She just "wanted to know" and to retail her findings, prefacing every statement with "They say".

One day I stepped in to buy a cake of ivory soap. As she took one from a newly opened box she said, "They say I ought to charge a cent a cake more, but I aint a goin' to. They aint wuth it." And nothing that was said about her own profits had the slightest effect on her. She never had money enough to stock up all at once. When her soap was gone if she had collected enough to buy a box of stationery she got that and proceeded to retail it. On another occasion a fine gentleman





from New York entered her shop and with the proper New York accent asked for a "wisk". Of course she didn't know what a wisk might be (who but a New Yorker would?) but when by motions he made her understand that a whisk broom was what he wanted, she looked all around the shop and finally brought forward a whitewash brush and asked if that would do. Many are tales like this that were told of this "odd old being" (as our grandmothers would have called her). But she was cherished by the town as one of its unique characters.

Her one recreation was arranging the flowers in the meeting-house and every Saturday when weather and vegetation permitted, she might be seen at the church door with her arms full of flowers, wild or cultivated, to fill the gilt and white vase that stood on the table below the pulpit. For 50 years she had done this. No one thought of interfering with her in this self-appointed office, but I have heard that years ago there was a woman who considered it nothing short of idolatrous, this bringing of flowers to the altar. Fortunately this critic was in the minority, so this decorating of the church went on for many, many years. Now this work is done by a committee, but it is not the same thing. In fact the whole village is different without Caroline.

The passing of these two old-time store-keepers brought to an end the era of which I have been writing—the era of hand spun, home made products. By 1900 the machine age was in full swing. The outbreak of home industries that began at about that time was but a sporadic hark-back to the time when heart and hand, combined with industry and frugality, laid the foundations and wrought the superstructure of our state.

During the dark days in which we are now wandering much has been said about the break down of the machine age. If that is so would it be possible for us to return to those days of small things; of underpaid, under-fed apprentices; of meagre pay and careful calculating about the half cent; of long days pegging away at the shoemaker's last; or stitching by the light of a tallow dip far into the night; or weaving for hours in the cold shed chamber; of weary seasons of hard toil for scanty remuneration; of the plainest of plain fare (perhaps not even enough of that); nor enough lights or warmth or conveniences of any sort—nothing indeed to encourage us except the consciousness that the result was a thoroughly well-made, durable, craftsman-like product? I fear that we have gone too far to be able to return to those "good old days". But it is pleasant to talk about them and to consider the rock on which we built.





# ANNUAL MEETING—1934

## REPORT

The 64th annual meeting of the Memorial Association was held on Tuesday the 27th day of February, Judge Thompson presiding. The financial report was read by W. Herbert Nichols, acting Treasurer. George Arms Sheldon, Treasurer and Vice President of the Association, had died on the fourth day of June, 1933, in his 61st year. His father had died in 1929, aged 81; his grandfather in 1916, aged 98. Mrs. J. M. Arms Sheldon, triply bereft, prepared and read a tribute to his useful life. Her report as curator records the interest of specialists in our historical collection, and this report and her paper on "The Lewis W. Sears Collection" reveal the genius ("an infinite capacity for taking pains") which she exercises in unceasing labors for the Association which her beloved husband organized in 1870.

At this meeting President Chase, of the Historic-Genealogical Society, was elected one of our vice presidents; Mr. Nichols became treasurer; Rev. Clair F. Luther and the widow and daughter of George Arms Sheldon were made members of the council. The officers are *President* J. M. Arms Sheldon; *Vice Presidents*, Francis Nims Thompson and John Carroll Chase; *Recording Secretary*, William L. Harris; *Corresponding Secretary*, N. Theresa Mellen; *Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols; and the *Council* consists of these officers and Winthrop P. Abbott, Frances N. S. Allen, Jonathan P. Ashley, Ellen St. Claire Birks, Helen C. Boyden, Mary W. Fuller, John H. Hackley, Minnie E. Hawks, Charles W. Hazelton, Clair F. Luther, Margaret Miller, Hazel S. Nichols, Agnes P. Sheldon, Elizabeth H. Wells and Margaret C. Whiting.

A tribute to Major Samuel Willard Saxton, which was written by his daughter, was read by Frank L. Boyden; and a paper on Helen Anna Catlin Phelon, prepared by her daughters, was read by Miss Mellen. Mrs. Viola Richards of South Deerfield contributed some of her early recollections of Charlemont.

"At early candle-light" supper was served by the women of Deerfield to an appreciative gathering in the town hall, and once more Deerfield Academy contributed sweet music. Mr. Sheldon Howe reported the excavation of a Scotch claymore on the site of the academy gymnasium, and exhibited the relic. There were three historical papers read during the evening, the first being Jonathan P. Ashley's "History of the First Congregational Church of Deerfield" which said that the first meeting





house was built before 1675, and the fifth or present building in 1824, though the gilded weather-cock which surmounts it was bought in 1731. Payson D. Newton of Holyoke gave a paper on "Trails of Western Massachusetts" containing much interesting information; and Judge Thompson told of "Some Ancestors of the Colrain Adamses" in England and eastern Massachusetts, commenting on the unconscious humor found in some of their wills and epitaphs.

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### REPORT OF CURATOR

The year 1933 differs in certain ways from the preceding twenty years. The ebbing financial tide on both continents, the "Century of Progress" Fair in Chicago, and the many cold, rainy days in the Spring and Summer, all tended to reduce the number of visitors at Memorial Hall to 4768. With the exception of the year of the World War, 1918, this is the smallest number of visitors in the score of years.

In spite of this fact the visitors have registered from 38 States of the Union, from the District of Columbia, Canada, and 10 foreign countries.

The schools visiting Memorial Hall have usually come in May and June. This year in addition to the 13 schools coming in these months, there were 3 in September, 8 in October and 3 in November, making in all 27 schools, which were represented mostly by various grades.

While we have had five groups of Boy Scouts, from Belmont, Amherst, Holyoke, Orange and from New Haven, Conn., we have had only three organizations. These were the Grace Church Club, Holyoke, The Improved Order of Red Men and the Massachusetts Library Club.

We have been fortunate in having among our visitors two specialists in their chosen field. Mr. Ledlie I. Laughlin of Princeton, N. J., has been making a study for many years of American Pewter, bringing the subject down from Kerfoot to the present time. He has examined our Collection in the Newton Room, and has given us valuable notes which will be added to our Catalogue on Pewter. Photographs of a few pieces were taken which Mr. Laughlin plans to use in his forthcoming work, giving full credit to our Association.

Miss Gertrude Townsend, Curator of Textiles in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has been deeply interested in one of our specimens of tapestry. She had a photograph of it taken and sent to England. Mr. Wace, an English authority on the





subject, thinks Miss Townsend is correct in her view that this is one of the English Sheldon tapestries. William Sheldon started tapestry weaving about 1561, and his son, Ralph Sheldon, carried on the work until his death in 1613, when it ceased to exist. If this tapestry is a sample of the Sheldon work, then it dates back to between 1561 and 1613.

The most valuable contribution received in 1933 is the Lewis W. Sears collection of 78 pictures and maps. These have been hung in one Room which has been restored for this purpose by the Association. The curator and her assistant, Miss Frances S. Drenning, have spent eight months in arranging this Collection historically, and in the preparation of a very full Catalogue which is herewith submitted. A paper descriptive of the Collection will be read later this afternoon. A bronze tablet has been placed in the Room containing the Sears Collection by Mrs. Jennie Z. Sears, wife of Lewis W. Sears.

In addition to the Sears Collection the Association has received 73 contributions, consisting of 47 Books and Pamphlets, 12 Articles, and 14 Manuscripts.

Miss Mellen, the Assistant, has continued her admirable care of the Hall. She has catalogued the yearly gifts to the library and has also spent much time in assisting visitors in their search for historical and genealogical information.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON

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## NECROLOGY

### GEORGE ARMS SHELDON

*By J. M. Arms Sheldon*

The sun was shining, the sky was blue, the birds were singing, but human hearts were anxious. They were waiting for a message — would it be a message of Life or Death? Slowly the hours dragged on, doubling, tripling in length. At last just as the clock was striking the noonday hour the message came, "A boy is born. All is well." Then the sun never shone so brilliantly, the sky was never such a sympathetic blue, the birds never sang so merrily, while human hearts were fairly leaping with joy. Life was triumphant. Everything was living. The boy might live a hundred years. Why not? No thought of death shadowed the sweet, satisfying gladness.

A name had been waiting for the child, so it was that on Tuesday, July 16th, 1872, in the town of Greenfield, Massa-





chusetts, George Arms Sheldon was born. When the twilight deepened into starlight every heart in two happy homes was singing a song of thanksgiving and gratitude.

Although sixty-one years have passed since that day, yet it had been a day to be as clearly remembered as if it were but yesterday.

As the little boy grew, traits of the mother and grandfather for whom he was named developed. When five or six years old his school life began in the little white schoolhouse on Union Street. Then he passed from primary to grammar and on to high school, graduating in 1891.

Like his grandfather he wanted a business career. It was his preference to a college training, and I do not think he ever regretted his choice. He became his father's clerk in the Sheldon & Newcomb hardware store, and later was with the Duncan & Goodell Company in Worcester. In this city he met and won Miss Jennie Edith Patch, a young woman of sterling qualities. On the death of the grandfather in 1897 the two came to Greenfield, where George continued with his father until 1904, when he purchased the coal business of R. H. Snow & Company. This business he carried on with marked success through life, while for many years he was Treasurer of the New England Coal Dealers' Association.

His financial ability being recognized he became a Director of the Franklin County Trust Company, and later a Vice-President. Now he was in the field of his choice which he enjoyed supremely. It was a time, as it is today, when sound business men were absolutely needed—men of keen insight into the motives of human nature, men of vision who could detect the breakers afar and steer their vessels away from the destroyers. The President of the Bank, Hon. John W. Haigis, has already spoken of Mr. Sheldon as an outstanding figure in business life.

There was one trait in the character of George Arms Sheldon which has not been mentioned, but which deserves to be recorded. Light was thrown upon this trait by a conversation between himself and one of his aunts when riding on a train from Boston to Greenfield. George said to his aunt, "You have a hobby." The aunt replied, "A hobby is a good thing to have. It helps to carry one through the trying crises of life." After a pause, George said, "*My hobby is my Home.*" Never was a truer word spoken. With unsurpassed devotion he lavished thought, time, money upon his Home, upon his wife and daughter Hazel. Sometimes it seemed as though he was in a chronic state of helping others, regardless of himself. Many devices to lighten household labor were installed, and always he strove to make his own and his guests comfortable and happy.





This desire for an ideal home led him to brighten the homes of others less favored than himself. It is not for us to lift the veil over his many beautiful and generous acts. Only those whom he has kept in his employ through this long period of ebbing tide—one for eighteen years, another for twenty-nine years—only these can fully appreciate what it is to have a friend in time of need.

This service for others caused him to be a generous contributor to the Franklin County Public Hospital. It was also, without doubt, one reason for his receiving the thirty-third degree from the Supreme Council Thirty-third Degree Masons.

In 1900 Mr. Sheldon became a life member of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. While he did not inherit the historic instinct of his grandfather, George Sheldon, still it was one of his keenest desires to have the work of this Association go on as his grandfather would wish to have it. To this end he was Councillor, Treasurer, and finally its Vice-President.

Why did not this comparatively young man reach the century mark? We cannot say with certainty, but it is reasonable to think that the many tragedies of his life weakened his heart, which caused his death. The loss of his only brother and sister in 1899, the sudden death of his mother in 1913, the long, distressing illness and death of his wife and father all told heavily upon his sensitive nature.

When the tide turned and it seemed as if he had rebounded to normal health, it was with a feeling of gladness his many friends knew of the great joy that had come to him in his marriage to Mrs. Agnes Patterson Sanderson. In a beautiful home which was in perfect harmony with his nature, and enjoying the rare devotion of a constant companion, with the sympathetic love of his daughter Hazel, and the changeless loyalty of his son-in-law, Walter Herbert Nichols, it seemed as if he might have many years of achievement and happiness before him.

It was not to be. On the fourth of June, 1933, he passed beyond our ken, but "to live in hearts we leave behind is not to die."





## THE LEWIS W. SEARS COLLECTION

*By J. M. Arms Sheldon\**

Every Collection is a challenge. It is a challenge to discover *why* the Collection was made, *how* it continued to grow, and *what* was its ultimate object.

The longer one studies and ponders over a Collection the more one sees in it. Not only does one see more in the Collection itself, but it may become a revelation of the mind and spirit of the collector and donor. Of course questions arise which may never be answered; still, taking things by and large the vision grows clearer, the longer it is held in view.

The Lewis W. Sears Collection consists of seventy-eight pictures and maps. These have been given to this Association by the will of Mr. Sears. They have been hung in one room of Memorial Hall which has been restored for this purpose by the Association; they have also been numbered and an unusually full descriptive catalogue has been prepared.

The pictures divide themselves chronologically into four groups. Each group may be regarded as a separate part, differing from the other three groups, yet the four taken together, make a fairly complete whole. The pictures center around Charlemont, a town in Franklin County in Western Massachusetts. The first group illustrates the early life of Charlemont, the second the period of the French and Indian Wars, the third the Revolutionary years, and the fourth recent Charlemont.

Let us pause just for a moment to visualize this spot of the earth's surface. See broad, fertile acres stretching far away, bounded on one side by a river, the home of various kinds of fish, and surrounded by hills, wooded for the most part from base to summit. It is a region above the lowlands where the northwest breezes blow charged with ozone. Is it not a spot of earth to attract venturesome pioneers? Yes, it is, and they come.

In 1735 the General Court of Massachusetts gave Boston three Townships, and this region was "Boston Township, No. 1." Five years later, in 1740, the name was changed to Charlemont. It is generally held the place was named after Lord Charlemont, the fourth Viscount. As this Lord Charlemont was born in 1728 he would have been only twelve years old when the name was first given. His father, however, had died in 1734, and, according to custom, the title of the father

\*I am indebted to Miss Frances S. Drenning of Greenfield for invaluable aid in the preparation of this paper.





may have been passed on to the son even though he was a small boy. In this case Boston Township No. 1 was probably named after Lord Charlemont. There are in the Sears Collection five pictures labeled as follows:—

Lord Charlemont (Nos. 1 and 2),  
Earl of Charlemont (No. 3), and  
Charlemont of the present day (No. 4).

The fifth picture bears this inscription, "For the Inn at Charlemont by request of Chief Justice Aiken. Charlemont" (No. 5).

There is also the Coat of Arms of the Charlemont Family (No. 6).

When the venturesome pioneers came they doubtless knew that the war-like Mohawks on the West had already worn a trail over the Hoosac Mountain (No. 7, picture not available) down to the Valley below. They must have heard of King Philip (No. 8) and the terrible tragedy in 1675 at Bloody Brook (No. 9) not far away. Doubtless they were familiar with the story of the Massacre at Deerfield under *Sieur de Rouville* (No. 10). They also knew the Indians were round about them. It may be that the boy who afterwards became the famous Mohawk Chief, *Thayendaneke* (No. 11), called later *Joseph Brant*, visited them, and there is a picture of "The Last Mohawk in Charlemont" (No. 12). Knowing all this, forts were built to protect themselves and their log cabin homes. There is a picture of Fort Charlemont (No. 13) in Ireland. It was large, commanding and very different from *Rice's Fort* (No. 14) in our Charlemont which was one of the cordon of forts erected on the North to protect the frontier towns. Further protection was given by Fort Shirley (No. 15), which was at first in Charlemont and later in Heath. This fort was named after *William Shirley* (No. 16), an able Colonial General. Then there was Fort Pelham in Rowe, which was probably named after *Henry Pelham* (No. 17), Prime Minister of England. Rowe, it is claimed, was named after *John Rowe* (No. 18, John Rowe, Mrs. Rowe, and their home). Beyond the Hoosac protection was given by Fort Massachusetts (No. 19).

In the century of which we speak *Philippe de Rigaud Vaudreuil* (No. 20) was Governor of New France from 1703 to 1725, while his son, *Pierre Francois Vaudreuil* (No. 21) was the last French Governor from 1755 to 1760. Across the Atlantic *Louis XV* (No. 22) held the throne of France.

The terrors and the tragedies of the French and Indian Wars were endured by the plucky pioneers. In 1746 Fort Massachusetts was furiously attacked (No. 23) and valiantly defended until the ammunition was exhausted.





On the morning of September 8, 1755, Colonel Ephraim Williams (No. 24) was ambushed and killed by Indians (No. 25, death of Colonel Williams), followed the same day by the fierce battle of Lake George (No. 26).

During these colonial years, General and later, Sir William Johnson (No. 27) was doing his marvelous work with Indians, training them to be efficient allies of the English. Robert Rogers (No. 28) was training his militia till they became famous as "Rogers Rangers."

September 13, 1759, General Montcalm (No. 29) and General Wolfe (No. 30) met in battle on the Plains of Abraham at Quebec, and the fate of France in America was sealed, while England held Canada in triumph.

Then it was that the French and Indian Wars ceased. New England breathed freely at last. Charlemont and near-by towns took on a new lease of life. Colrain was incorporated in 1761, Charlemont in 1765, and Shelburne, named after Lord Shelburne (No. 31), in 1768. Two years after the incorporation of Charlemont, in 1767, Reverend Jonathan Leavitt (No. 32) was settled as its first minister.

Peace, however, was short-lived. Rumors of a Revolutionary War were in the air. George III (No. 33) reigned in England, and Sir Francis Bernard (No. 34), loyal to his King, was Governor of Massachusetts. There are eight pictures in the Sears Collection illustrating six American Generals, one Colonel, and one British General. These are:—

Gen. John Stark, born in Londonderry, N. H., 1728, died 1822 (No. 35),

Gen. John Stark at Bennington (No. 36),

Gen. Philip Schuyler, born in Albany, N. Y., 1733, died 1804 (No. 37),

Gen. William Heath, born in Roxbury, Mass., 1737, died 1814 (No. 38),

Gen. Rufus Putnam, born at Sutton, Mass., 1738, died 1824 (No. 39),

Gen. Benedict Arnold, born in Norwich, Conn., 1740, died 1801 (No. 40),

Col. Ethan Allen, born in Litchfield, Conn., 1737, died 1789 (No. 41),

Gen. Anthony Wayne, born in East Town, Pa., 1745, died 1809 (No. 42),

Gen. John Burgoyne, born in London, England, 1722, died 1792 (No. 43).

The only battles of the Revolution represented by the Collection is the Battle of Bennington, already mentioned, and the Battle of Saratoga (No. 44) fought October 7, 1777, which resulted in the surrender of General Burgoyne.





There is a picture of one building intimately connected with Revolutionary days. This is the "Green Mountain Tavern" (No. 45). It was long before we could locate this tavern, but finally through Mr. William B. Browne of North Adams we learned that Green Mountain Tavern was the first name given to Catamount Tavern in Bennington, Vt. It was in the Council Room of this tavern that the Green Mountain Boys met during the Revolution.

Charlemont of recent times with surroundings is illustrated by the following pictures:—

John Barber and "Eastern View of central part of Charlemont" (No. 46),

"Central View of Charlemont" (No. 47),

"Charlemont Upper Village" (No. 48),

"Charlemont" (No. 49),

"Hunters' Camp on Mohawk Trail" (No. 50),

"Shelburne Falls and Colrain" (No. 51),

"The Old Gaines Tavern" (No. 52) in Colrain was famous for its hospitality from 1862 to 1886.

The quotation (No. 53) from Samuel Johnson, regarding the Country Inn may have hung in this tavern.

Hawley near Charlemont is represented by "Peak Mountain" (No. 54).

Two distinguished educators and one beloved author of the period are shown in the Collection. In 1797 a little girl was born in Buckland close to Charlemont who was to demonstrate the fact that Woman hungers and thirsts for knowledge, and is often eager to consecrate her life to the cause of liberal education. This little girl was Mary Lyon (No. 55), founder of Mt. Holyoke College.

In 1811 a boy was born in Charlemont who through his long life labored in the educational field. He was scholar, lawyer, secretary of the State Board of Education and a loyal alumnus of Williams College. This boy was Joseph White (No. 56). His broad interests led him to become a life member of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, and his generous gift in 1880 heartened the President, George Sheldon, and helped to carry on the historical work of the Society.

In 1829 a boy was born in Plainfield who lived during a part of his boyhood in Charlemont. He became a lawyer, an editor, a man of great personal charm and a delightful writer of books. This man was Charles Dudley Warner (No. 57), whom no one could meet once and forget. There is one picture taken from this author's "Being a Boy" which is "Fishing on Swimming Rock" (No. 58). This picture is not in some of the editions of the book. In the edition sold now (1933) it is the frontis-





piece. Uncertainty has existed in regard to the location of the Swimming Rock, but Mrs. Viola F. Richards of South Deerfield states in the *Springfield Union* of July 2, 1933, that the author writes as follows (p. 221 in her edition and 169 in the edition now sold): "The middle pier of the long covered bridge over the river stood upon a great rock, and this rock which was known as the swimming rock (whence the boys on summer evenings dove into the deep pool at its side) was a favorite spot with John when he could get an hour or two from the everlasting 'chores'."

The picture in the Sears Collection shows a boy sitting on the Swimming Rock with the pier at one side and the boards of the bridge above him.

Among the close friends of Mr. Sears was Chief Justice John A. Aiken (No. 59), who was deeply interested in this Collection.

There are a few miscellaneous pictures covering different periods of time but all of historic interest.

These are:—

Frary House (No. 60) in Deerfield, "standing in 1698, built sometime after 1683",

Old Indian House (No. 61), Deerfield, 1698,

Old Indian House (No. 62),

Old Indian House Door (No. 63),

Third Deerfield Meeting-house (No. 64),

Zoar Bridge (No. 65).

I am indebted to Mrs. Lewis W. Sears for locating this picture. The original may be found in the "Geology of Massachusetts" by Edward Hitchcock, published in 1841 (Vol. I, p. 262, fig. 21). The delineator was Mrs. Edward Hitchcock. The bridge crossed the Deerfield river in one of the wildest ravines of the Berkshires. It was unusual being a long bridge without a central pier. It connected that part of Charlemont known as Zoar with Florida. This bridge was swept away in the flood of 1869.

Presidents of the United States from Washington to Van Buren (No. 66),

St. Patrick's Cathedral (No. 67) in Ireland, where rest the remains of several bearing the title of Lord Charlemont,

"The Nose" (No. 68) in the Mohawk Valley on the Central New York Railroad. This is one of the three spurs of mountains in the State of New York called "Anthony's Nose".

Additional light is thrown on the pictures by the maps. There are ten of these. The arrangement may not be chronological as some of the maps bear no date.

The first map (No. 69) shows the "Mohawk Trail in the Province of Massachusetts Bay between Fort Massachusetts





and the Deerfield Meeting House together with the Forts protecting the Province to the West from invasion by the French and Indians during King George's War from 1744 x x x x to 1748, and during the Seven Years War till the fall of Quebec in 1759."

The second map (No. 70) is "a plan of Towns upon Turnpike from Charlemont to Adams, 1795."

The third map (No. 71) is the Province of Massachusetts Bay.

The fourth map (No. 72) is the "North Boundary Line of the Province of Massachusetts Bay. Those Towns that lay north of the Boundary Line were formerly in the Province of New Hampshire but now in the jurisdiction of New York."

The fifth map (No. 73) represents a section of Massachusetts between "Hoosack Mountain" and the Connecticut River showing position of Forts Massachusetts, Pelham, Shirley and Sheldon.

The sixth map (No. 74) shows a part of New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Eastern New York to the Canada Line.

The seventh map (No. 75) gives the Counties of Berkshire, Hampshire and Franklin.

The eighth map (No. 76) is the "County of Franklin exhibiting all the Roads, Rivers, Brooks and Mountains Compiled from Actual Surveys by Arthur W. Hoyt, Mar., 1832."

The ninth map (No. 77) is Hammond's Road Map of Western Massachusetts, New York, 1915.

The tenth map (No. 78) is the only rolled map. It represents Western Massachusetts. Boston, 1891.

It will be seen that several of the maps include Charlemont within their boundaries.

It would seem from this study of the Sears gift that the Collection was made to visualize, so far as possible, the history of Charlemont and its surroundings.

The Collection continued to grow through the years owing to the intense interest of its originator and the sympathetic help rendered by Chief Justice John A. Aiken.

The ultimate object of the Collection, so far as we are able to judge, was to bring into bold relief the leading men of action and the stirring events that happened in Western New England and Eastern New York during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Every one who examines thoughtfully this Collection cannot fail to be impressed by the care shown in the selection of the pictures, and in the mounting, labeling and framing of the material. What impresses the student most deeply, however, is the significance of the Collection. Every picture throws light on the ultimate object so that one is absolutely sure there





is a reason for its being in the Collection, though he may not be able to discover the reason for months.

While there are no costly old oil paintings or steel engravings, the Collection proves that a person of moderate means may create a valuable visual history of the town in which he lives.

It is greatly to be hoped that the example of Lewis W. Sears will be followed by others until there is a vital and accurately illustrated history of every town in New England.

These pictures are given to the  
Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association  
by

Lewis W. Sears  
of Charlemont, Massachusetts  
They include a group placed in the  
Inn at Charlemont  
by

Chief Justice John Adams Aiken  
of Greenfield





# ANNUAL MEETING—1935

## REPORT

On the twenty-sixth day of February the 65th annual meeting of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association was called to order by Vice President Thompson; the report of Secretary Harris was read by Miss Mellen, Treasurer Nichols made a financial report, and both were accepted. Mrs. Sheldon then reported as Curator, saying that a summer of unfavorable weather was responsible for a lessened attendance at Memorial Hall and that, after the completion of various major projects, her time had been given to several lesser matters. These annual reports constitute a history of the development of the Sheldon Collection. Her activities are responsible for its classification, and her service as a gracious hostess to pilgrims attracted by the collection and the pre-revolutionary homes of Old Deerfield has been most valuable. Frederick E. Hawks, a member of the Association since 1911, died December 6, 1934, and his family has been requested to present an account of his life.

Miss Minnie E. Hawks read a paper on Mary Houghton Starr Blaisdell which had been written by Miss Ellen Starr, and Judge Thompson paid tribute to the memory of Mrs. Fred H. Tucker of Newton. Miss Margaret C. Whiting presented a considerable collection of ancient juvenile books and read a descriptive paper which was both informing and amusing. Mrs. Mary Williams Fuller gave a valuable and interesting account of the Williams Family in Deerfield, of whom descendants bearing other names live in the village today. All officers of the Memorial Association were reelected.

At the evening meeting "The Pocumtuck Buttonball", a paper written by the Honorable George Sheldon when ninety years old, was read in part by Mr. Frank E. Bogues of the faculty of Deerfield Academy. The venerable tree, which has witnessed the inception and life of the village, has been given expert care and is in flourishing condition. Judge Thompson's talk on the centenary of Edward's Everett's dedication of the Bloody Brook monument made its theme the orator's inspiration of the youth who became the historian of Deerfield and young Sheldon's dedication to the great work of his life. Miss Margaret Miller read an entertaining record of New England Travelers during the half-century following the Revolution; and Mrs. Jane Wright's paper, "The Pioneer Spirit", told of adventurers from this region who emigrated to what was then "the west".





## REPORT OF CURATOR

The ebbing tide of 1933 made an effort to flow in 1934, and in spite of a cold June and a rainy September it succeeded in bringing 4944 visitors to Memorial Hall, the number in 1933 being 4768. The usual number of 2000 visitors in the month of August sank in 1933, to 1202, while in 1934 it rose to 1400. This is promising for the future.

The visitors have come from 39 States of the Union and 11 foreign countries, including India, China and South Africa.

Schools or classes with their teachers have visited us from New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Jersey. These have been noticed during the year in the columns of the *Recorder-Gazette*.

The larger objects having been accomplished, the curator has spent more time with visitors at the Hall, and much more time on the increasing correspondence. People are seeking historical information on widely different subjects, such as "Ancient Wells", "Old-time Baby Carriages", "The Deerfield Massacre", "Mrs. Catlin who gave water to the wounded French Officer", "The Manuscript Paper on Heath by Anna Maxwell", "Asher Benjamin", "Recently Discovered Indian Relics", "Lucy Prince, or 'Luce - Bijah' the Negro Poet", "Eleazer Williams", "Wayside Memorial Stones", "The Underground Railroad", and so on. The most frequent subject of inquiry is in regard to the genealogical record of the writer's Family.

The unusual number of 242 contributions have been received this year. Five groups are of rare significance and value. The first group is "The Life and Letters of Henry K. Brown and Lydia Udell his wife" in eight large volumes. These are prepared by H. K. Bush-Brown, son of Henry K. Brown. The work is beautifully done, and the volumes are richly illustrated by photographs and sketches. The Association is deeply grateful for this rare gift.

The second group consists of three oil paintings given by Mrs. Lucinda Montague Gunn of Sunderland. These are William Montague, a Revolutionary soldier, Persis Russell, his wife, and Lucinda Wilder, the wife of Albert Montague, who was the mother of Miss Abbie T. Montague, the efficient assistant of Henry W. Taft in writing the "History of Sunderland."

The third group is made up of several articles given by the late Dr. Marion Rockwell of Amherst. This contribution is significant because the donor, though not connected with early Deerfield families so far as we know, yet wished to place her treasures where they would be carefully preserved. It is un-





fortunate that there were no memoranda in regard to the history of the articles. Concerning one specimen, which is a blue and white, six-legged china teapot, the statement is made that "it was carried by a pioneer from Massachusetts to New Hampshire in her saddle bag." One longs to know who this pioneer was and when she took this journey.

The fourth group is a collection of 71 Children's Books, given by Miss Margaret C. Whiting. This afternoon we shall enjoy Miss Whiting's description of this juvenile library which is here on exhibition, and which later will be placed in the library of the fire-proof wing.

The fifth group is certainly unique. It consists of garments, utensils and ornaments of "Little Mary Hawks," who was born in Deerfield in 1799, the daughter of Zur and Martha Hawks. "Little Mary" was a perfect dwarf. Intelligent, versatile in conversation, efficient in action, she was one of the rare women of Old Deerfield. This collection was given by her niece Mrs. Melicent Hawks Hatch to Mrs. Sarah A. Pratt, and is contributed to the Association by Mrs. Pratt's daughter, Lucy Pratt.

The work of the assistant, Miss Mellen, has increased this year so that now she keeps the written catalogue of the annual additions to the library besides preparing the typewritten cards. Her care of Memorial Hall is beyond praise.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON.

Deerfield, Feb. 26, 1935.

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## THE WILLIAMS FAMILY IN DEERFIELD

*By Mary Williams Fuller*

In the graduating class of Harvard University in 1683 were two young men by the name of Williams — John and William, own cousins, grandsons of Robert Williams, of Welsh origin, who came from England in the good ship, "Rose of Yarmouth" in 1637.

Robert Williams with his family of wife and four children settled in that part of Boston called "Rocksbury." Two more sons were born to him in this country and it is from *Samuel*, born in England in 1632, and *Isaac*, born in Roxbury in 1638, that the Williams families of Deerfield were descended.





John, son of Samuel, was born in 1664. He became the first minister of Deerfield in 1687. William, his cousin born in 1665, was settled as minister of Hatfield in 1686. These two young men, barely over twenty, life long companions, school and college mates, chose for their life work these remote frontier outposts, fraught with dangers of many kinds. Genuine religious zeal and very real courage must have inspired them. Still greater, it seems to me, must have been the courage of the two young women who soon came to grace the homes of these young divines.

John married Eunice Mather of Northampton of the eminently religious family of that name; William married Elisabeth Cotton of an equally well known family of preachers. Elisabeth was the daughter of Seaborn Cotton and Dorothy Bradstreet who was a daughter of Anne Dudley Bradstreet, the first American poetess, (lately receiving renewed appreciation.) Elisabeth could trace her ancestry through three governors and an endless series of churchmen.

How much these two families saw of one another we wonder. The difficulties of communication between the two towns were great. Wide stretches of swamp land, long miles of dense woods very likely to harbor lurking Indians lay between Hatfield and Deerfield. A track, scarcely to be called a road, was the only guide. Horse back and ox carts were the only methods of travel.

Many bonds united John and William — their mothers were sisters, Theoda and Martha Parke, daughters of William Parke of Roxbury, a man of property, who assisted in the education of these two grandsons.

Roxbury was at this time a center of Indian affairs. Here John Eliot, "apostle to the Indians", as he was called, ministered to a large and important congregation of sturdy English folk who had left England to seek religious freedom. Many of the foremost early New England divines began life under his guidance and inspiration. The old records fairly bristle with "Reverends". One wonders how sufficient congregations to support them could be supplied.

John Williams was baptized by John Eliot and spent much time with him in his youth and acquired some knowledge of the Indian tongue, useful to him later.

For *seventeen* years after John and Eunice settled in Deerfield life moved along with a fair amount of serenity in the little village. Men were always on guard, high palisades surrounded the center which stood a little higher than the surrounding fields. Now and then men were killed while at work in the meadows, now and then attempted raids took place, guns were ever close





at hand and we fancy the strong inner shutters of the windows were carefully closed each night.

During those seventeen years eleven children were born to John and Eunice. Three of them died in infancy, the eldest son, Eleazar, was away at Harvard College when, on the night of February 29, 1703-4 the sudden and frightful Massacre took place; the two youngest children were killed at once; the other five with their father and mother started on the long cold journey to Canada. Mrs. Williams survived but one day.

The story of the terrible trip has been told over and over again, also that of little Eunice who never returned to her old life, who married an Indian and lived to be ninety years old, much honored and beloved by her Indian descendants.

In 1706 Mr. Williams and the rest of his children were redeemed. At the earnest solicitations of his parish he returned to Deerfield in 1707 — again proving his indomitable courage.

The people of Deerfield built for him a fine house of great dignity and beauty, some of which was lost when it was moved in 1877 to make way for Dickinson Academy. It stood, then, close to the ground in good New England fashion; the trees that stood near it, the hollyhocks that surrounded it and the long line of barns and sheds that followed a curving road behind it, gave it a setting that can never be replaced. Beautiful workmanship went into the details of its finish—the noble doorway, lovely corner cupboard, wide window seats and splendid staircase.

John married his wife's cousin, Abigail Allen. Four children were born of this union.

John Williams died in 1729, forty-two years after his first settlement in Deerfield, a man much beloved, a man of great learning and varied interests. In those days knowledge acquired when books were scarce was often condensed into manuscript selections. Such a little home-made manuscript book in the Reverend John's handwriting deals with many subjects — of "Mists and Fogs", of "Wind and water, or the doctrine of Hydrostatics", of "The Earth", of "Fire", of "Beasts, Birds, and Fishes", of "Insects", of "The method of drawing a meridian line upon a horizontal plane", of "Mercury, Vulcan, Mars", and of "An Echo".

Only one of the Reverend John's many children remained permanently in Deerfield. Elijah, son of the second wife, born in 1712, graduated from Harvard College in 1732 and lived in the house that was built for his father. He kept a store which stood on the south-east corner of the home lot near the great button-ball tree that still stands there. Elijah was an influential man, especially in military matters. He was captain of the "Snow shoe" men in the old French war.





He had seven daughters and two sons. Only one of them lived in Deerfield — John, born in 1751 and named for his grandfather.

He graduated from Harvard in 1769 at the age of eighteen, studied law for a while but became interested in exporting to the West Indies. All sorts of things, "masts and staves, horses, ginsing, beside corn, flour and beef to the Boston market."

He was a justice of the peace, representative and senator, a trustee of Williams College. He did much to establish Deerfield Academy to which he left much of his property. He was known as Squire John, and was said to have been a "man of wit and wisdom, full of hospitality and goodwill, of anecdote and cheer", "extensively known and appreciated in the commonwealth as well as in his native town." He was sometimes called visionary by his fellowtownsmen but his visions became possible by his own help and generosity — the first bridge to Greenfield, the canal to Turner Falls, many new roads being some of them. He lived in the house on the west side of Deerfield street at the brow of the hill south of the present Deerfield Academy. The beautiful, great horse-chestnut tree there is said to have been planted by Squire John from a horse-chestnut brought back from his wedding journey. He possessed many fine pieces of furniture and much beautiful silver.

Never very robust, and of a consumptive tendency he seems to have passed on to his two sons delicate constitutions—both died in early manhood and with John's death in 1816 the line of the Reverend John Williams comes to an end in Deerfield.

Beside Elijah the Reverend John was survived by three sons, all ministers, and several daughters. Their descendants are many — quite often some of them come to Deerfield to see where John Williams, the Redeemed Captive, so nobly lived, taught and died. His daughter, Eunice, came from Canada to her brother Stephen's in Longmeadow to visit, but could not be persuaded to remain or to remove her Indian dress. It is said she came to Deerfield also but this is uncertain — but in 1837 a number of her descendants came to Deerfield and camped above the village on what is known as Fort Hill. They came into the village asking for people by the name of Williams. There were several families of that name then but they chose to go to the house of Ephraim Williams because there they could see a little, white Williams papoose, Ephraim, the last.

By 1921 the tribe had forgotten the name of Williams, although still continuing the name of Eunice, and when in that year my daughter, Elisabeth met in Dublin, New Hampshire an Indian girl by the name of Elisabeth Sadoques, they soon discovered they were both descendants of that far away Robert of Roxbury.





Elisabeth Sadoques' father and mother had left St. Francis, Canada and come to Keene, New Hampshire to educate their children. The tradition of the tribe, of the trip down the Connecticut River to see the place from whence the great-great grandmother, Eunice, had been taken captive, was well known in their family and when Elisabeth found Miss Alice Baker's book of "New England Captives" in the Keene Library she found out who Eunice was and from where she came. In 1922 Elisabeth Sadoques came to Deerfield in February and read a very charming paper on her tribe and their ways before the P. V. M. A.

It is to the descendants of John's beloved cousin, William, that we must look for the Deerfield Williamses. It may be a surprise to many that, although the name of Williams no longer appears on the town rolls, there are at least seven families here that still claim direct descent from William and his half-brother, Ephraim. Ephraim was twenty-six years younger than William.

Their father, Isaac, had settled in Newton, as it was then called, which included Cambridge.

Isaac owned a great quantity of land there, owning at one time the site of Harvard College.

Ephraim began life in Newton and married Elisabeth, daughter of Abraham Jackson, a name closely allied to the history of Newton. Ephraim and Elisabeth had two sons; Ephraim born in 1715, and Thomas born in 1718. The mother died soon after the birth of Thomas and the two boys were brought up by their grandfather Jackson.

Ephraim, the father, married again and soon followed John Sergeant, missionary to the Indians at Stockbridge, four families being chosen to accompany Sergeant and to settle in Stockbridge.

On August 29, 1735 Sergeant was ordained in Deerfield in the old meeting house. A large company of people were present. Governor Belcher, here on important business with the Maquas Indians had held a long conference with them through the previous week. The Housatonic Indians from Stockbridge were here. Reverend Nathan Appleton of Cambridge preached the sermon. Stephen Williams, (the boy captive), son of Reverend John now settled in Longmeadow, addressed the Indians with some help from an interpreter. William Williams of Hatfield made an address to the Governor—a memorable day for Deerfield.

It took John Sergeant and his accompanying settlers two days to travel from Deerfield to Stockbridge. The young children of Ephraim Williams rode in panniers, deep baskets, slung on the sides of the horses.





A few years later, 1739, John Sergeant married Abigail, the eighteen year old daughter of Ephraim Williams. He built a house very similar to the Reverend John Williams house here, on a high hill in Stockbridge. This house has recently been moved into Stockbridge center and most beautifully restored and furnished with very ancient and appropriate furniture, also surrounded by a charming old-fashioned garden.

There many things belonging to John and Abigail are treasured and there is the big leather-bound Bible presented to the Stockbridge Indians, travelling always with them as they retreated farther and farther west. Quite recently it has been returned to Stockbridge from the last of the tribe in Minnesota. Here also is an unique and unusual article of past usage—a fording chair; to be carried by four men to convey women and children or sick persons across the many streams encountered on a journey in those days—a rustic chair on long poles, the ends of which are curved to fit over the shoulders of the carriers.

Some old letters written by Ephraim Williams, the elder, have been reprinted in pamphlet form. Ephraim was not given a college education and the spelling and phrases are original but full of interest. One letter written from Deerfield, where he was visiting, to his youngest son, Elijah, in Stockbridge urges him to cultivate orchards. He says: "I am more sencible of the want of apples than perhaps you may be aware of. I have sent as farr as Northfield and Northampton and all towns round to get six barrills of apples and dont know yet I can gett any at all; so that you need not feer takeing too much pains about bringing on an Orchard." In several letters he urges this son to learn to sing. "I beg you," he writes, "to learn the rules of singing if possible, so that you may frequently wake up your glory. I mean your tongue to praise God." Ephraim died in Deerfield in 1754 and is buried in our old burying ground.

His two oldest sons, left in Newton with their maternal grandfather, received fine educations. Ephraim the eldest was sent around the world, an unusual experience in those days; afterwards he made several voyages to England, Holland and Spain. Eventually he came to his father's home in Stockbridge and was sent from that town as representative to the General Court in Boston. He also lived some time with his cousins in Hatfield and his brother Thomas in Deerfield. He became interested in military matters and was made a Captain of a New England company and commander of the line of forts west of the Connecticut River.

The story of Fort Massachusetts is closely allied to the story of Ephraim Williams' life. He had an active part in defending and rebuilding that Fort, was made a major and later a colonel.





He led the attack on Crown Point, September 8, 1755 and fell in that action called "Bloody Morning Scout."

In a long, specific and generous will he left this statement "That the residue of my estate be given to support and maintain a free school in the township west of Fort Massachusetts" and adds: "That when a suitable number of inhabitants are settled there it shall be incorporated into a town by the name of Williamstown." The school became Williams College.

Ephraim Williams never married, although many mistaken souls claim him as an ancestor. His brother Thomas named one of his sons for him; also Thomas' grandson and great grandson have the name of Ephraim and for this reason probably received some of Colonel Ephraim's things. It was the delight of my childhood to see the silver covered memorandum book engraved with his name, containing ivory leaves on which to write and a quaint clasp to close it. It became my pleasant but regretful duty to give it to Williams College when the last Williams died in Deerfield.

Among the many papers that came to my care at that time, beside many interesting old family letters, were a number of deeds to Colonel Williams from soldiers of his company. He seems to have bought much land around Williamstown by paying the soldiers the money they would rather have than the land granted to them by the Commonwealth, richer then in land than money. These deeds also were given to the College. A letter to his much respected cousin, Israel Williams, enclosing his will asks him to try to locate some soldiers of his command that he has been unable to find and pay, and to see that they are paid. His letters, many of which are given in Professor Perry's book, "Origins of Williamstown", show him to have been a man of fine character and good sense. He laments his lack of academic education and wishes, he says "to help those as yet unborn" to have those advantages he did not have. He was but forty years old when he fell by the hands of the Indians at Crown Point.

Thomas, Ephraim's only own brother, much beloved by him, but three years younger, was given a medical education by his grandfather, Abraham Jackson. At the age of twenty he came to Deerfield as a doctor, and, with the exception of a few years during the French and Indian War when he served as surgeon, chiefly at Fort Massachusetts, he was the town doctor for thirty-six years. His son and a grandson succeeded him in that office and from him the line of doctors continues to this day. His great-great grandsons are both doctors; one a well known alienist in Los Angeles, the other a writer on medicine and science.





Thomas had a wide territory to cover. On horse back he visited the line of forts from Fort Massachusetts to the Connecticut River, putting up over night some times at Hall Tavern. He was with his brother at Crown Point. A long letter to his wife gives us the particulars.

Stephen Williams of Longmeadow was chaplain of the regiment and other cousins held commissions also.

Thomas married in 1740 Ann Childs who died six years later after the birth of her third baby. He then married his own cousin's daughter, Esther Williams, granddaughter to William of Hatfield and Elisabeth Cotton. Eight of their eleven children lived to grow up. A daughter, Mary, married Dr. Elihu Ashley, a student with Dr. Thomas. Ephraim, one of the sons became a prominent lawyer and his only son became Episcopal bishop of Connecticut. William, the third son succeeded his father as town physician. He bought the house in 1794 on the corner of Albany Road and built for an office a little ell on the south side of the house. This little room with windows on three sides, a corner fireplace, surrounded by deep cupboards and shelves, contained a folding bed where the Doctor's medical students slept. It was entered by a separate outside door and a long entryway led to another door which opened onto a dark staircase. Mr. George Sheldon used to tell of a skeleton that hung just inside that door, and that it was a test of courage, in other words a *dare*, among the pupils of the school, that then stood just east of the house, at the south end of the Common, to run into the Doctor's entrance and open the door onto the skeleton, dimly lighted from a little window from above.

William, known as William Stoddard, the Doctor, married Mary Hoyt who lived in the Indian house. He died in 1829 and his nephew, Stephen Williams, became in turn Doctor Williams. For one hundred years Deerfield had a Dr. Williams.

Solomon Williams was the fourth son of Dr. Thomas and lived on in his father's house. A daguerreotype of his six sons taken when they were old men has recently been given to the P. V. M. A. Sturdy, masculine types they were; known for their good sense, solidity of character and terseness of expression and I must add, profanity.

On one occasion the six went to church together led by one who had been away for a long time. He was heard to mutter as they filed into church, "Where in Hell is that pew?"

Charles and Ralph were the gentler ones of this sextet. Uncle Charles, as he was known by every one, was town clerk for thirty-five years and postmaster for a long time. Ralph succeeded his father, Solomon, on the old place. He was noted for his genial, kindly ways. His descendants have perpetuated his name, Ralph Williams Ball; as the Ashleys have kept the





name of Dr. Thomas — Thomas Williams Ashley, which was also the name of that young and dear hero of the world war.

Still another son of Dr. Thomas was Elijah whose son, Samuel Barnard, was distinguished for his bravery in Kansas in the Civil War and his courage in helping fugitive slaves. His daughter, Elisabeth, married J. Wells Champney and returned to the old house under the enormous elm that stood close to the sidewalk in front of the Keith house. This tree towered above all lofty elms so that from Pocumtuck rock it looked like a vast dome rising from a cathedral of tree tops. It fell in 1885 and the house was soon after moved back to its present site.

The descendants of Dr. Thomas Williams and Esther are numerous here in Greenfield, in Boston and middle and far west.

The last family by the name to live here was that of Ephraim, son of Dr. William Stoddard Williams and grandson to Dr. Thomas. He lived in his father's house at the head of Albany Road. He was a farmer with land in the north and south meadows, a pasture and woodlot on the mountain, as most of the farmers in Deerfield street had.

Deerfield Academy had by 1813 or 14 acquired state-wide fame—young people of both sexes came here to complete their education unless going on to college.

Edward Jackson of Newton brought his little daughter, Rebecca, fifteen years old, driving the long hundred miles in a chaise to live in one of those small, bleak rooms in what is now Memorial Hall. Her teacher was Edward Hitchcock, later president of Amherst College. After she finished at the Academy she returned to Deerfield to teach in the little red school house at the south end of the Common, close by the home of Ephraim Williams, her school mate. We hope he was not only her friend but protector in her struggles with the rough boys of the school who probably liked to tease the little blue-eyed school marm.

Be that as it may, in 1822, early in May Ephraim hitched up his horse and departed for Newton where he and Rebecca were married on the morning of May 12, 1822. They then set off in their chaise followed by many gay couples in chaises for Sudbury and the Wayside Inn, where they had their wedding party.

They lived in Deerfield all their lives, and three of their five children passed most of theirs in the old home.

Ephraim, the youngest son went to Williams College but left before his graduation to enter service near the close of the Civil War. Later he fought the Indians in Mexico and in 1867 was so badly wounded that one of his legs had to be amputated. He was retired from the service and brevetted Captain. With his death in 1904 and that of his elder brother in 1911 the name of Williams came to an end in Deerfield.





## THE POCUMTUCK BUTTONBALL

*By George Sheldon*

How old is our Pocumtuck Buttonball? Hard by this Buttonball is a young tree of its own kith and kin. This youngster has been under my own observation for fourscore years. Its slow growth has been noted, and from this, as a foundation, I have deduced largely the age of our Pocumtuck Buttonball. I judge it came into life about 1560. It is by far the oldest inhabitant of Deerfield.\*

When the Dedham Grant of 8000 acres was laid out at Pocumtuck in May, 1665, there is nothing in the report of the committee to indicate the condition of the land, then surveyed. When in 1666-'7 Masseamet and Chauk, sachem of Pocumtuck, deeded to John Pynchon, for the use of Dedham, the land already selected under the Grant, we are left equally in the dark. When the homelots and the meadow land were laid out, each to its owner in 1671, we find in the reports of the committee language by which we may infer, that the land was not covered by forests. It had probably been kept clear for cultivation by the Indians. The several lots as laid out ran east and west and their bound ends were called indifferently "the woods" or "the mountain". So it would seem that the plain lands laid out were bare, and the high land east and west was covered with primeval forest.

Under this condition of things it is not easy to understand why our Buttonball was left to grow on our Meetinghouse Hill, but I am satisfied that in 1671 the Tree was more than a century old. In its babyhood no foot of white man had trod the soil of the Pocumtuck Valley or the Connecticut Valley. The wild beast and the wilder man were its only companions. Under its shadow the children of Chauk or Masseamet may have gambolled. Here Masalisk may have dandled her baby Wuttawoluncksin on her knees — if Indian mothers do such a thing — or she may have hung the birch shield on which he was strapped up on a lower limb, while she was planting, or in due season, wielding one of the stone hoes, now in Memorial Hall.

Under this tree Weyuanock, Grenneachchu and Mequinichell may have smoked their pipes while boasting their

\*Mr. Sheldon wrote this paper in 1908. According to his judgment the tree would now (1935) be about 375 years old. Colonel A. W. Dodge of the F. A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company thinks the tree is still older, placing its age between four and five hundred years.





prowess in defeating the proud Mohawks; and perhaps planning the foul murder of Saheda, the Mohawk ambassador, and his princely retinue. This dastardly deed, which brought a swift retribution and broke forever the power of the Pocumtucks, may have been witnessed by the Buttonball.

Is it presuming too much to make our training field a gathering place for the Pocumtuck warriors? Perhaps so, and again, perhaps not. There is plenty of evidence that Indian wigwams occupied the land on which our village is located. Probably there is not one homelot on the Street upon which I have not found traces of Indian occupation. Hard by within sight of the growing Tree was the last resting place of their dead. Whatever the rites or ceremonies of burial the Buttonball could witness them all. The meadows on which grew their corn and pumpkins lay on three sides of the village plateau. These facts point to this as a center of population. It is also to be noted, as another fact, that the young Buttonball sprang up and held its own here; this tends to show that this tract was not burned over as a pasture or held as a cultivated field.

It was not easy for the Tree or the native to feel at home in the presence of the white man, the magician who controlled the ox, felled the mightiest oak with a bit of shiny stone and commanded the thunder and lightning in hunting the moose and bear. Even after years of contact and some knowledge of gunpowder the feeling of the superiority of the white man was still a superstitious fear. The Indian never dared to face the Englishman as an equal. The Buttonball was therefore as much surprised as the settlers when the attack was made upon the town Sept. 1, 1675. The Tree observed, however, that the assailants kept at a prudent distance from the little stockade. The seventeen houses which they destroyed were all out of gunshot range. This whole affair was under the eye of the Buttonball as was also the attack two weeks later. Again on the 18th it saw the martial array when Captain Lothrop and the "Flower of Essex" marched proudly forth into the fatal ambush at Bloody Brook. Seventeen of the stalwart men whom it had seen about their daily tasks were in the convoy as teamsters. Not one of them was ever again seen by the Buttonball. When at night Moseley came with the heavy tidings all were lying stark and dead in the bloody mire. Not one word of the agonizing scenes of the terrible night has come down to us. Two hundred and thirty-three years have passed but we have still one living witness among us. But the Buttonball is as mute to an appeal as if it, too, had marched down into the eternal silence, or had joined in an agreement with all contemporaries to draw forever an impenetrable veil over the unspeakable bitterness of grief and despair. We know from the records





that under this veil were hidden eight women and twenty-six children who had become widows and orphans since the morning sun.

The Buttonball stood in the center of the settlement. It had seen the square, awkward log cabin take the place of the picturesque wigwam. It had also seen the larger lodge rise in which the strange men gathered for the weekly Pow-wow of their Medicine Men. Uncouth were the sounds therefrom which floated over among its listening leaves. This and all the other buildings were now but wind-blown ashes, and all was silence save when the wild animals came straggling back to their old haunts.

In 1677 the silence was broken for a brief period. The Buttonball was suddenly startled by the yell of Ashpelon and his men. It saw Quintin Stockwell dragged into a captivity of which he gives such a living relation; saw Old Sergt. Plympton for the last time as his career ended at the stake in Canada; saw Samuel Russell, the 8-year old nephew of the hero of Hadley start towards Canada which he never reached; saw Benoni Stebbins begin to build a home on the very spot where his name was immortalized in 1704; of both these events the Buttonball can testify.

Was it with gladness or sorrow that the steadfast Buttonball saw the returning tide which again broke the silence, and drove back to its lair the denizen of the forest? There comes a feeling that the Tree must have missed the varying activities going on within eyeshot, when it must have wondered what curious thing would turn up next, and that the returning fugitives were welcomed by the oldest settler to a renewed acquaintance.

Events now moved rapidly. The settlement teemed with stirring life. Time came when the Buttonball was absorbed in a movement going on under its very nose. What was the occasion of all this excitement about its feet! Did it bode good or evil! Was its very life in danger! A large pit was being dug nearby; with shouting and confusion men with oxen and carts bringing stones as if to fill the pit came and went. Other teams dragged long straight tree trunks which seemed to be ruthlessly cut into pieces by busy men with shining hatchets and saws. These fragments of timber were then stripped of the brown bark and lay white in the sunlight. Soon appeared old acquaintances, John Stebbins and John Hawks, with measuring stick and scratchall making cabalistic marks on the timber. Less skilful men follow with augers, mallet and chisel making excavations wherever the cabalistic figures are found. The sharp eye of the Buttonball follows all the proceedings in detail. At length the mystery of it all is solved; when joint is





joined to joint and placed in position the whole stands confessed. It was the frame of a stately house.

Later came the teams laden with boards, broad and stout or narrow and slim, from the saw-pit where they had been laboriously cut out by the bone and muscle of the tough sawyers, or, it may be, with shingles split from short bolts and shaved to shapely form in the East Mountain forest. When at last the confused conglomeration of men, oxen, timber and stone it had so long looked upon had been sorted out and assimilated into one grand whole, the Buttonball beheld the finest mansion it had ever looked upon or imagined. This was to be the home of the chief Medicine Man the Minister, and a new chapter was now to be opened in the life of the Buttonball which was henceforward to be in the very center of the village activities. It saw the new meeting house spring up almost in reach of its growing arms. It saw the great rejoicing when the new minister brought home his fair bride; she was welcomed heartily by the united people.

As the years sped on young, musical voices were heard about the house of the minister and sweet, round faces peered out of the windows. Soon one after another toddled over the low threshold, tumbled and rolled about in the fallen leaves of the Buttonball, and played hide-and-seek about its swelling trunk. A firm friendship grew up between the Tree and the fast-growing family of Parson Williams. Year in and year out the children gamboled and played childish games under the branches stretched out lovingly over them, plucking grasses and wild flowers and weaving them into bracelets and baskets in summer, and in the autumn watching with delight the dancing leaves shook playfully down on the still air.

The lone Buttonball was the gathering place for the youngsters living about the training field. The Williams children were doubtless joined by those of Benoni Stebbins, John Sheldon, Samuel Carter, Thomas French, John Catlin and Godfrey Nims. There was no let-up in their sports when the fierce blasts of winter roared up from the frozen river and bare meadows. With the sturdy Tree trunk for a base we may suppose the boys on the West side fortified in mimic warfare against the East side boys. Walls of snow in place of stockade were raised against the enemy, and balls of snow instead of lead were fired by the assailants. With this and other games under the Buttonball boys and girls gathered strength and hardihood of bone and muscle which could carry them through the terrible ordeal that was even now lying in wait for them.

All too soon the blow falls. The oft-told tale of the awful occurrences of Feb. 29, 1704, were all enacted under the eye of the Buttonball. The night was dark, and it could not discern





what the deep shadow creeping slowly over the white snow on the North Meadows might be. When it heard the fierce warwhoop of the Indians about its very feet the fact was revealed, and the shadow appeared as direful substance. The bare limbs thrilled and shivered with excitement, regret and self-reproach that it had not discovered the danger and given the alarm. All this increased as it heard the crash when the front door of the Parson Williams house went down.

In the red light of burning homes it saw the furious attack on the house of Ensign John Sheldon, and heard amid the horrid din the ringing blows of the hatchets on the spike-bossed face of the front door, which held fast to its trust. The Tree rejoiced to see the stout door hold its own against the raging savages, while devastation held high carnival, and despair reigned in every direction.

We now rejoice that this brave door has come down to us. This sacred relic is the most cherished possession in the Hall of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association—the Old Indian House Door.

The Tree saw the heroic defense of the Benoni Stebbins house, and lives to glory in the stone that keeps green the thrilling story which of all living things the Tree alone can tell — “All of which it saw, and part of which it was.” For were not showers of shot poured upon the house from behind its sheltering trunk? The Buttonball was an unwilling ally of the Indians for its sympathies were now altogether with its disturbed neighbors and new friends.

When the family of Mr. Williams was mustered for its terrible march into captivity the Tree saw that its ranks were not full. Where was the faithful Parthena, the constant attendant of the children, and where was little Johnny? All too soon the answer came. When the sad group was marched away, the house was set on fire. The light streaming out of the door and windows revealed to the Tree a ghastly spectacle. The missing were accounted for. Poor patient Parthena, the drudge and the delight of the children!—she is spared the dreadful march to Canada. She was murdered in cold blood while in the futile defense of her darlings. She is free while her revered master and loved mistress are miserable slaves at the mercy of the bloody savages. There at the very threshold, where the full light from the open door streamed upon it, lay the slain woman, her dark limbs in sharp contrast with the white snow, her blood,—as red as the best,—oozing slowly over the hard crust. Near her lay the six-year old boy, the pride and joy of her heart, the crimson spot where he lay still growing larger. Here also was the six-day old baby, now seen for the first time by the horrified Buttonball.





The now famous Old Indian House stood with its front door—then young and with no historic name—face to face with the Buttonball and they were fast friends and gossips. None passed the portals of the one unnoticed by the other. Three months before the Tree had seen Hannah Chapin alight at the door from off the pillion of proud young John Sheldon, at the close of their wedding journey from Springfield. It saw the grave but glad faces of the Ensign and his good wife, Hannah, as they scanned the fair face of the bride, and gave a hearty welcome to their new daughter.

Now the mother lay dead within, killed by a shot through that very door, and the Tree saw the young wife hobbling painfully along with a sprained ankle to join the train making up for the northward march urged to go faster by a barbarous master. How long could she hold out?

It was a joyful meeting when they next came face to face,—Hannah and the waiting Tree. One by one the survivors of the captivity came back. Little by little the flock of Mr. Williams resumed its wonted ways. The good pastor and his children with a new mother became settled in a house built by the willing hands of the people. All the survivors but Eunice, the stray lamb; she never returned to the fold. Her vacant place was soon filled by other children, and little Eunice was nearly forgotten by the Buttonball. But by her father, never. Never for an hour was his heart eased of its burden of anguish for the loss of her body and soul.

The Buttonball knew and was intimate with the family of Parson Williams from the beginning to the end. It could tell the personnel of the good minister, his two consorts, and all of their sixteen children, and the eight grandchildren born upon this homelot. It witnessed and grieved over the tragedies which befell, was privy to the joys and rejoicings and was in full sympathy with them all. It heard the fervent blessings invoked by the fond father on the heads of three sons when they severally left the shelter of the fold, and were ordained to fill high places of honor in the land in his own holy profession. It breathed the fragrant blossoms of the orange, and witnessed the wedding festivities, and saw the glad tears and smiles of the farewell embraces when two of the daughters left the maternal hive blushing brides, and gave their hands to the men who had won their hearts, to become their helpmates in the same high place and profession of their father.

The Buttonball witnessed, also, the gloomy shadows of the cypress which fell, from time to time, upon the stricken family while thirteen of its members were being garnered in the chill, quiet granary on the Old Albany Road. The last of them all was the fifteenth child of Parson Williams. He was born and





spent his life in this house. He was, at his death, the leading citizen of the town in civil, judicial and military life, and he was buried with pomp and circumstance such as the Buttonball had never before seen.

On the return of Mr. Williams the scattered flock gradually gathered, and through hardship and suffering slowly increased in numbers; but the meetinghouse grew not one whit in capacity and now it must give way to a new one. This far surpassed the old in size and style, and, the Buttonball thought the means of the people. It sprang up almost under the spreading branches of the Tree. The gilded rooster perched on the peak of the tall and graceful spire could fairly crow over the topmost limbs of the Buttonball, but there was never any jealousy or rivalry in the new companionship.

Before the meetinghouse had received its finishing touches, the pride of the people in the fine edifice was at one fell stroke, turned to bitter grief, and almost to bitter despair. Their beloved pastor, at whose behest the structure arose, was stricken down before he had met his flock therein. The sympathizing Buttonball saw his prostrate form followed by a weeping train, carried from under its protecting arms to the final resting place beside his murdered wife in the old burying ground.

It was in the pleasant month of May, 1735, that Elijah Williams had brought his bride, Lydia Dwight, to her new home. The Buttonball was dressed in a new spring suit, and with its sweetest smiles joined in the welcome, and the rejoicing consequent on the happy event. The Buttonball took an early opportunity to inform the bride that her grandfather Dwight was one of its early acquaintances among the white men. This circumstance formed a special bond between the twain. The bridal wreath had hardly faded before the young wife became alarmed at seeing strange Indians prowling about, singly or in groups, and even smoking their pipes under the branches of the Buttonball. At first the Tree was startled, too, but so soon as the squaws and papooses appeared it assured the bride that all was well for these were never taken with a hostile party. Her husband informed her that there was nothing to fear, as these Indians were here to meet Gov. Belcher for a peaceful palaver. A few weeks later the Tree and the bride heard the stirring notes of a bugle, and soon Gov. Belcher and his staff in brilliant uniform drew near. Some fourscore Indians met the Governor, but all were strangers to the Buttonball. Their presence, however, carried it back to early days and early friends, and it was soon drawn to one anxious mother who daily brought her sick baby to see Dr. Wells, who lived next door, and it offered her a shelter from the hot August sun. The grateful mother with her moaning child spent many an hour





under its protecting arms, refreshed, we may believe, by the soothing whispers of its leaves.

The Buttonball did, however, recognize among the white men gathered to meet Gov. Belcher some friends and acquaintances of long ago. One of these it had seen when in the flush of young manhood he attended the ordination of John Williams, and had been a frequent visitor at the parsonage. He was now a gray-headed man of three-score and ten. Another, the Buttonball saw with delight, was one of its grown-up pets, long absent from town, none other than Stephen Williams, the captive boy of 1704; now a distinguished divine, and prominent among the officials. A third man, bowed with premature hardship more than with years, was finally recognized. One who as a boy had spent many happy hours playing with the older Williams children in their childish games under its branches. In playing "Indian" or "Bear" he had climbed to its topmost branch, the most daring of them all. He had been carried to Canada in 1704, and had grown up among the Indians and the French. He was now the official interpreter as Capt. Joseph Kellogg. Another mutual friend was at the front here. One whom the Buttonball first saw as a baby in his mother's arms when she was welcomed home from Canadian captivity. He, too, grew up in sight of the Buttonball, had long been a companion of the Williams boys and girls, and, in due time, was married to one of the girls. He was now living at Fort Dummer where Kellogg was Truck Master. How much the four had in common to recall and talk about while resting from their duties and sitting under the cool shade of the Buttonball. Here they were joined by others who had been in the hands of the Indians, and who had little or no faith in their professions of friendship now,—John Catlin, Thomas French, Mehuman Hinsdale, John and Ebenezer Nims, Jonathan and Remembrance Sheldon were of these. Each of them was born and brought up under the eye of the Buttonball, and each had tales to tell of terrible trials and sufferings at the hands of the treacherous savages.

The Tree was sorry when the Conference broke up; it stood on tip-toe and strained its topmost eyes to see the cavalcade, as with its friends in the ranks, it disappeared towards Cheapside. The Tree now had leisure to think over recent events and to recall the curious thrill which ran through its very heart when first the voices of the Indians fell upon its ear. It was the language learned more than a century and a half before and nearly forgotten. With mingled emotions it pondered upon the changed condition of things during that period which itself had seen and known, and it musingly wondered whether on the whole, there was more real happiness and contentment in the





wild life of the savage, or the more conventional life of civilization.

About 1741 the old Corner Store was established at the right elbow of the Buttonball, on the southeast corner of the Parson Williams homelot. Intimate relations were kept up between the Tree and the Store until the removal of the latter in 1878,—about one hundred and forty years.

Time passed on. Nothing, however, appeared to interfere with the towering growth of the Buttonball, and its increasing dignity of trunk. But time which cherishes, as surely brings decay. The worm was already seeking its heart, but many years would pass before the revelation of its work.

The Corner Store was occupied by Maj. Elijah Williams, son of Parson Williams, and was for many years the commissary headquarters for Northern Hampshire County. Here the outlying frontier forts were supplied with the munitions of war. The Commissary carts coming in and the pack horses going out were everyday sights for the Buttonball. Officers, and men, scouting parties, marching companies bound for the seat of war, made this a common center. Here came Maj.-Gen. Phineas Lyman, Gen. Joseph Dwight, Colonels William, Ephraim and Israel Williams, Col. John Stoddard, Capt. Phineas Stevens the hero of No. 4, Capt. William Lyman, Capt. Ebenezer Sheldon, Capt. John Burk, Sergt. John Hawks, and many more men who served their country bravely and well. The Tree became intimate with them all, and heard many a private conference within its shadow when the leaders had disagreed upon the best modes of action; but it never peached.

At nightfall on the 24th of September, 1755, there was an unusual stir on the common. Capt. Nathaniel Dwight of Belchertown appeared with sixty men who were billeted on the village. Capt. Dwight lodged with Maj. Williams. They were enroute for the seat of war. Here they were joined by Capt. William Lyman of Northampton, with his company, and by the gallant Sergt. John Hawks and fourteen men from Deerfield. At the Corner Store they all received the necessary outfit for the service. Powder, lead, flints, hatchets, camp kettles, blankets and other necessities for the long march. When all was ready Capt. Dwight paraded between the meetinghouse and the Buttonball, 124 men in all. The Tree heard his last word of command, "March"! and the soldiers filed round the Corner Store, marched down the old Albany Road, and away to face the foe on the dark and bloody ground at the head of Lake George.

At high noon of Dec. 3, 1755, the Buttonball had another view of Capt. Dwight's command marching up the old Albany Road. The enemy had fled before their arrival, and they had





worked at the building of the unfortunate Fort William Henry. The Tree watched out for the Deerfield soldiers, and rejoiced at the safe return of them all.

As time had told on the Buttonball so also on the meeting-house which had at length begun to feel in its spire the weight of the fine steeple. The complaining cracks let in the wind and the rain. In 1767 the Tree saw the original steeple removed, and the building of a square tower from the ground at the north end with an elegant and graceful belfrey and spire. On the apex of the spire the old Rooster was perched. He had remained sound in wind and limb, but had become a little rusty in his garment, and his eyes a little out of order. So he was posted off to Tom Drowne at Boston, and came back with a new gilt coat and "new globe eyes". Its new station was a little more lofty than before and above the aspiring Tree. There may have been a light touch of jealousy on this subject, but it never appeared to on-lookers, save when the wind was in the East. The East wind seemed to affect both, much as it affects men and women whose nerves are near the surface. With that the Rooster turned its back squarely on the Buttonball, and the Tree, in turn, leaned to the West, and stretched its stubby arms that way as far as possible. When the wind veered to the West this mood passed, and all was serene again. The Buttonball extended its arms toward the Rooster, as asking forgiveness, while the bird looked kindly back and the twain went on billing and cooing as before.

The conquest of Canada ended the French and Indian wars in this region. But the quiet of peace was not for long. Short-sighted Great Britain began to extort money from the colony to supply her failing exchequer. This was resisted, not only as unjust, but as contrary to the rights of Englishmen. The Buttonball was in a whirl of excitement between the friends and the enemies of these measures. Some of its earliest and closest friends were on the Tory side; the most prominent men of the town, the minister, the judge, the sheriff, the town clerk, and all who had or hoped for any civil or military commissions from the Crown. It had heard from the meetinghouse the weekly prayer for the King for more than forty years. All the occupants of the Corner Store had been loyal to England, and here the Whigs were denounced in round terms as rascals and rebels, fit objects for the halter.

At the outset the Buttonball's leanings were towards the Tories but its position gradually changed. The Whigs had by subscription established a regular Post to Boston, and were in close connection with Sam Adams, Otis, Warren, Revere and their compeers. A Committee of Correspondence was formed and the "Sons of Liberty" were early established. The Button-





ball had many friends among these who were held to be of a grade one peg lower, but who had become restive under the domination of the officials and were now coming to the front. The post rider deposited his parcels and letters at the Old Indian House, and there the people gathered at the appointed hour of arrival. These dispatches were read and the news disseminated. This was received with cries of satisfaction or howls of rage according to the views of the hearers. There followed discussion, hot altercation not always confined to words, and the Buttonball became well informed on the merits of the controversy. At heart it was in favor of the Patriots.

Tory headquarters were at the Old Corner Store; that of the Whigs at Saxton's tavern, just beyond, where plans were openly or secretly discussed. Between the disputes and town talk on the Street there was little doing that did not reach the ears of the Tree.

The Buttonball rejoiced with the Whigs when the "Sons of Liberty" erected a Liberty Pole in front of David Field's store, July 29, 1774, and it heard the sneers and taunts of the merry Tories predicting sad results for the actors. By this act the Patriots of Deerfield are seen to be well to the fore in the impending struggle.

About sunset on an April day every twig of the Buttonball was startled and stirred by the long continued rattle of James Warren's drum and the thrilling fife of Justin Hitchcock. The Day of Lexington and Concord had birth the day before, and the Long Roll was sounding the alarm to the Minute Men of Deerfield. It called them to form in line under the bare branches of the Buttonball, with musket in hand and knapsack on back, fully equipped for a march to what fate had in store for them. Now there was hot haste but no confusion. This was what the Patriots of Deerfield had been waiting and drilling for. An hour before the town, convened in the meetinghouse, had voted their pay for this exercise. Again the imperative drum. Then the hurried goodbyes, the cheers and the tears, and the Buttonball saw Capt. Lock, Lieut. Bardwell, Lieut. Stebbins and their men set their determined feet, with measured tread, towards the opening scene of the American Revolution.

The Buttonball has never seen or heard of any event which has exceeded this in its far-reaching importance in the lives of nations.

These men bore themselves bravely on Bunker Hill where Lord Howe learned a lesson he never forgot. They saw the greatest man of the age draw his sword and take command of the Continental Army under the Washington Elm on Cambridge common.





The Whigs got occasional control of the town meetings, and June 25, 1776, ten days before the immortal Declaration by the Continental Congress, the Buttonball heard read from the meetinghouse, a vote to place on record a solemn and formal Declaration of Independence from the Kingdom of Great Britain, by the town of Deerfield. The Tree can never forget the indignation of the Tories at the Corner Store, nor the jubilation of the Whigs at the Saxton tavern when the newly elected town clerk presented a copy of the vote to the landlord, who was the town's representative with instructions to present the same to the General Court. In due time the post brought the Declaration by Congress. The enraged Tories could find no language strong enough to express their wrath, but gave defiant assurance that all concerned in these declarations would soon end their career upon the gallows.

A year later another company of Deerfield Patriots were called to aid the country in an hour of need. The Tree saw the usual parting scenes when the hardy yeomen, led by Joseph Stebbins, now a captain, and Lieut. John Bardwell, with the same drum and fife marched down the Old Albany Road; they were bound for Bennington, Baum and the boastful Burgoyne. When the game was bagged, with weary and warworn feet, but light and joyful hearts, they set their faces toward the East.

One day observers saw the Buttonball in a state of great excitement. It was waving every bough, and all the leaves were clapping their hands. News of the downfall of Burgoyne had been received, and the Tree had been silently but eagerly watching out to the West. Now it had seen the gleam of the arms, and recognized the notes of James Warren's drum. The cause of all the excitement was easily guessed, and every one was on their feet. Mistress Lucy Stebbins, thinking the news too good to be true, dumped her baby into the cradle, and rushed up to take a peep from the garret window. She was rewarded by a sight and sound which sent her flying down stairs; in a twinkling she had joined the joyful group collecting under the Buttonball. Up the Old Albany Road marched the heroic band which had taken an active part in humbling the haughty Burgoyne, and Lucy's heart bounded as she saw her husband leading the van. Their forms were erect and their footsteps were firm. They had forgotten the hundred weary miles behind them, their footsore feet and marched as men who knew they had done their country service, and had earned the glorious welcome they were receiving as they neared the end at the foot of the Buttonball.

The people who gave this hilarious welcome were all Whigs who cheered themselves hoarse. The Tories were conspicuous by their absence. Until this day they had refused to believe





that their idol was broken, and the proud Briton was no longer marching where he listed, with his hireling horde, but where he *must* as a humbled prisoner in the hands of the Rebels. Their confident boasts, their cock-sure prophecies, and their malignant threats were now nothing but very thin air. They were filled with wrath, distressed with evil forebodings, down-hearted and sullen. The Buttonball was fully aware of this state of affairs, for the leader of the Tories was its nearest neighbor.

With the fall of Burgoyne the Tory party had become a trifle less bumptious and boastful. With the capture of Yorktown they were astounded and aghast. They looked at each other in silence. When would the sky fall? When the news arrived and the bells pealed, the old cannon thundered, and the shouts of the Whigs testified to the Buttonball their grateful joy, the Tories had retired from observation. But when King George finally gave the United States a Quit Claim Deed the generality wisely accepted the situation, and quickly fell into the ranks. The triumphant Whigs were as considerate of their feelings as human nature would allow. But long years of bitterness, hardship and struggle had passed under the observant eye of the Buttonball between the beginning and the happy ending of the heroic struggle of freedom against tyranny.

A few years later the Buttonball was witness to another exhibition of Deerfield patriotism. It had perfect knowledge of the plans and operations of the government from the officers who gathered in and about the Old Corner Store. One day 1000 soldiers were paraded on the common. They were billeted on the inhabitants; of these 95 were assigned to John Williams, son of Maj. Elijah, who lived on the old homestead. Where could he stow them unless he made them a shakedown of hay or straw under the shelter of the Buttonball? 93 were put in the care of Lucy Stebbins, but the Captain had a large barn and shed room, and could throw in a big garret, if need be, for more room. There was another call for help from the State in a crucial hour. The Tree was to witness another scene of parting of Lucy Stebbins and her husband. The absence was short, and Capt. Stebbins announced on his return that Daniel Shays was a fugitive, and his deluded followers scattered. They had returned in triumph, and the constitution and the laws were again in force. The Buttonball had its last exhibition of real soldiers in the ranks of war, but when trouble with France was brewing, and war seemed imminent in the near future the patriotic spirit ruled the hour. Excitement ran high when a letter from President Washington was read to a crowd under the Buttonball. It contained the offer of a commission in the United States Army to a citizen the Tree had known from toddling childhood. It was felt that war would be a great





strain upon the still unsettled constitution, but all had unbounded faith in the Great Leader—the first in war, the first in peace, and the first in the hearts of his countrymen. This faith was warranted, and the frail bark of the Republic was safely guided over the breakers and shoals, and lay with an even keel upon the stormy sea.

But a terrible bolt was soon to fall. Worn out by toil and care for his beloved country, the child of his faith and works, now emerging from chaos, the Greatest Man of his age, laid down his heavy burden at Mount Vernon, Dec. 14, 1799, an event which caused clouds and darkness to cover the land.

On the 29th the Buttonball observed the leading citizens with wet eyes and bowed heads, making fit preparations for his obsequies. That was a day of sadness and gloom. There were no partisans or parties. All were sincere mourners. For a full hour in the morning the Buttonball heard and felt the measured strokes of the passing bell. It saw the military companies of the neighborhood gather and parade with all the maneuvers befitting the sad occasion. It heard with bated breath the wailing fife, and the muffled drum of the regimental band beating the dead march, as the procession marched from Academy Square to the Meetinghouse. The chief place in the column was given to the Colors which were at half staff, draped with black, bearing the letters G. W., and guarded on either side by three officers of rank. Then followed the officers of the Revolution. The soldiers marched in platoons. Next came the civil and military dignitaries in due order, and a long line of strangers and citizens. The Buttonball watched while with slow and measured steps, the procession came on, the minute guns of the artillery adding to the effect. After the usual evolutions, the soldiers stood with arms reversed while the Tree looked down upon the procession as it marched into the meeting-house. It caught notes of the funeral oration from the crepe-shrouded pulpit; it heard the sobbing dirge, and the solemn anthem — *"The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places. How are the Mighty fallen!"*

The Buttonball again looked down and saw the assembly slowly emerge and reform in ranks; again the muffled drums and the minute guns, as the procession moved away to Academy Square. It heard the company firing of the small arms, and the salvos of cannon which closed the celebration of the sad obsequies on that never-to-be-forgotten day.

Interested as the Buttonball was and always had been in affairs local and national, it also had a hand in private affairs of vital importance to its own well-being, even to its own existence. The Tree had treacherous enemies within, and was openly at war with a mighty foe, aggressive, untiring, relentless. It was a





defensive war, its enemy the Storm King! Upon one luckless day, a still, calm day in August the Tree was surprised by a sudden and furious onset from the enemy lying in ambush behind the West Mountain, who broke through its main guard and wrenched away one of the largest branches. At the place of the fracture a large opening was left in the trunk, and the sad condition of the Buttonball was now exposed to a curious world. The heart had been entirely eaten out, and the trunk was but a thin shell, as empty as a cistern, and its walls only a trifle stouter. When the first germ of decay was planted in its heart, no man will ever know. It may have been in the shock of Feb. 29, 1704, or it may have been at the passing of its good friend, Parson Williams, a score of years later. However that may be, it was now evident that some spirit of evil had been for long years preying upon its vitals; silent as the tomb, and in darkness deep as the starless midnight, the deadly work had been going on unceasingly.

To all observers the Buttonball stood towering toward the skies, rotund, stalwart and sound to the core, a magnificent monument of the work of nature. Of the treacherous spirit within none knew or suspected but the watchful sap. The sap knew and it had been quietly but industriously laboring, year after year, making stronger the defences against the insidious foe by adding layer upon layer to the outworks, and the Tree had until now successfully defied the wind and the storm. But in this crisis it is to be inferred, that now as always, the greatest danger was from secret treachery within. The constitution of the Buttonball had at length been so far weakened that its secret enemy had hatched up a conspiracy with the Storm King to lay the noble structure in the dust. As we have seen this dastardly scheme fell notably short of its vile intent. The sap had enlisted the willing leaves and anxious roots in its service, and had come off conqueror. But the event shocked and discouraged the Buttonball. It was ready to give up in despair, and for many years it seemed tottering to its fall. The sap, the leaves, and the roots, however, persisted bravely and hopefully, and to this day they still hold the fort.

It was more than fourscore years ago, when the Buttonball was at its lowest estate, that I made its acquaintance. The opening in its trunk was so big and inviting that the boys climbed in and out at will. Therein was a deposit of excellent punk for use on Independence Day. It was then thought that other limbs would soon fall, and that the last days of the Buttonball were close at hand. The prophets have long ago been laid in their last beds. The Tree bids fair to outlive their children, and it may turn out, their grandchildren.





In the past eighty years the Buttonball has seen many things come and go. A brick school house had sprung up under its very eyes. In the second story was a Hall for public use,—town meetings, singing schools, lectures, lyceums. The Tree had seen on its platform men of local and national fame. Among the former were Edward Hitchcock, Epaphras Hoyt, Samuel Willard, senior and junior, John Wilson, Stephen W. Williams, Jonathan A. Saxton, Pliny Arms, Bishop John Williams, Rodolphus Dickinson. From abroad, Benjamin R. Curtis, George Bancroft, Horace Greeley, Charles Sumner, Edward Everett, George N. Briggs, Alexander H. Bullock and others.

As the corner store was the military headquarters, so also it became the gathering place for the politicians and party workers, and the Buttonball heard hot discussions on the civil questions of the day; not always to be sure in civil or civilized phrase, and if the Tree rightly understood, canes were occasionally used to emphasize arguments. The Buttonball had seen party organizations rise, change their war-cry and their name, then vanish to be succeeded by others which are now with last winter's snow. The Tree was well up in the knowledge of events which led to the Civil War. The slavery question was often the subject of discussion in and about the old Corner Store. A determined few were earnest and active in trying to arouse the indifferent to the horrors of African slavery.

The Kansas troubles were eye-openers. An anti-slavery mass meeting was held under the shadow of the Buttonball, and the Tree heard some of the most eloquent champions of the right pour forth to the thousand listening ears their fears and their indignation. It saw the cloud of indifference gradually lifting, like fog from a valley, and the beacon lights of liberty flashing from peak to peak across the awakened land. It had become a question of slavery for all, or liberty for all, and the Tree saw the rising tide of Civil War.

When the gallant young minister bearing the stars and stripes led the recruiting squad past, like a vision, the Buttonball felt every ounce of its sap stir and strive. It heard all the sad and all the cheering news from the front, and when the nation's wounds were healed it saw the stones arise in its front, to keep green the names and deeds of the unreturning brave. The Buttonball heard word of the impressive service of dedication which included four odes by gifted women, whom it had known from their birth, and an eloquent oration from one of the well-beloved of the nation. Every morning for forty years this memorial and the Buttonball have exchanged greetings, and every evening they look kindly upon each other until both fade into the night.





In these days of hurry and scurry, a few but an increasing number of people are looking backward to events which time has proved to be of great importance, as beginnings or epochs, in the history of men. These people show a growing activity in recalling these events, and emphasizing them in story, celebration and enduring stone. Centennials, bi-centennials, and even semi-centennials are more and more in evidence. A few years ago the Buttonball smiled to itself when it observed some of its old friends busy in preparations to celebrate the bi-centennial of the most notable event in the history of the town. It seemed to the Tree such a recent affair. What are the people thinking of! Only two hundred years ago! All the same the Buttonball joined heartily in the exercises of the occasion.

It may have been this celebration which moved the Buttonball to a reminiscence on its own hook for its own amusement, or perhaps, for the information of the curious in these later days. It appears from the record that under its own eyes and all within the bounds of the stockaded fort, it had seen many and various exhibitions of brain and brawn by our ancestors, the yeomanry of Deerfield, in the numerous occupations named below. The officers and shops noted often had several occupants in succession. The list is alphabetical.

One armorer's shop; two blacksmith shops; broom maker; cabinet maker; four carpenter shops; two chaise and wagon shops; clothier; coffin warehouse; two commissary stores; two Judicial court rooms; three doctors; goldsmith; two hatter's shops; hairworker; housewright; jeweler; six law offices; malster; two marble shops; meat market; paint shop; plow shop; Post Office (eight locations); printing and publishing office; the Register of Deeds office; saddler's shop; the sheriff's office; seven shoemakers; seven stores; two tailors; seven taverns; watchmaker, weaver, two wheelwrights; wig-maker. Every one of these officers and offices, these tradesmen and their trades, the artisan and his arts, these storekeepers and their stores, have utterly vanished.

During this same period there existed outside of the fort other establishments which were practically under the observation of the Buttonball. The Tree recalls five blacksmith shops; two bookbinders; three brick yards; four broom shops; one button shop; one cabinet shop; five carpenters; two cartwrights; two chaise and wagon makers; three cider mills; two harness makers; two cooper shops; two curriers; one distillery; one fanning mill maker; one felt maker; one fulling mill; three hatters; one jeweler; one pocket-book maker; one printing and publishing house; one potter; one rope maker; two saddlers; twelve shoe shops; one silversmith, three stone cutters; twelve stores; seven tailors and tailoresses; three tanneries; nine





taverns; two watchmakers; two weavers and two wheelwrights.

The Buttonball saw all these places of business rise, flourish, and pass away, not a single vestige remaining to remind us of their existence.

Beside the men and women who had wrought their physical energies and skill into articles of convenience and utility, transmuting such forces into clothing, utensils, implements, vehicles and dwellings, the Buttonball was also in close converse with all the professionals, the men and women of science, the men and women of letters and art. Every one of the authors included in the totals given below have walked and talked under its branches. The Tree recalls forty writers who have lived within the stockade and fifty-one on the Street outside. Many others have doubtless passed behind the veil.

Within this same stockade there have lived under the eye of the Buttonball military officers of the following grades; one General, eight Colonels, four Majors, twenty-two Captains; and four Lieutenants. Each of these could be summoned by a nod from the Tree. There were in the Street, within the sound of an alarm gun, eight Colonels, five Majors, sixteen Captains and twelve Lieutenants. With a single exception they were all beyond the ken of the Buttonball.

The Tree has seen generations of boys and girls grow up and grow gray, and sadly looked down as they took the last journey along the old Albany Road. It has seen their children and their grandchildren grow up and grow gray; the Tree knew them every one, boy, girl, man and woman. The children of the present with all of life before them, are its daily companions. What record they may leave on the page of history may perhaps be learned by future generations from the leaves of the old Buttonball.

This paper, as has been stated, was written by our historian George Sheldon in 1908 when he was ninety years old. It would please Mr. Sheldon greatly to know that twenty-six years later, in 1934, the Trustees of Deerfield Academy and Mr. Frank L. Boyden gave the Tree a new lease of life. Under the direction of Colonel Albert W. Dodge, an expert in his chosen field, the Tree has been treated internally, pruned and cabled externally. It is now predicted that our grand old Pocumtuck Buttonball will live to bless the lives of many future generations.





## CHILDREN'S READING A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

*By Margaret C. Whiting*

A hundred years ago, and even a bit later, children were put in a category by themselves, fed, clothed and taught as a distinct class separated by a vast difference from their elders, given a special treatment that was recognized as strictly appropriate to their immaturity, which was never complicated by any suspicion of their having opinions and ideas of their own. To protect their ignorance of life, to hedge them about with carefully erected walls of morality, to set their little feet firmly on the strait path of righteousness,—above all to inculcate the narrow doctrines of the religious thought of the period, were the determined approach to youth in our grandparents' day. It had merits of its own, that old wornout system. Each generation takes its turn in applying fresh experiments on its children, and the so-called "progressive" method of today is just as much of an experiment as those it has superseded, and will in time be discarded for still another attack on the ever-present problem of bringing up the child. Poor child, so many attempts to bend the twig!

In that earlier day we are considering, they did it in season and out by means of the printed page as well as through verbal exhortation. There were books for all ages, sometimes slightly sweetened to catch the unwary, but always intended to form the mind, adorn a moral truth, or teach a religious idea. Above all, religious education was the main objective. Very quaint now to us are those pious ideas, and very distressing, also, when we consider the cruel beliefs they embody; for we may not forget that in the early days they were the result of honest convictions. The writers genuinely believed in the lessons they tried to teach, and their good faith may not be questioned.

There was, of course, a convention about this sort of composition; a strict pattern was followed, developed from an accepted train of thought, and to this fact we must attribute the probable failure of these lessons to make much impression on the children themselves. We permit ourselves to doubt the lasting effect of the doleful tale of "The Young Cottager" on the mind of its little owner, who read it in 1814. We will hope it was pride of possession only which made Nancy Isbell write her name in careful copperplate script along the top margin of its





yellowed page. It is a very good specimen of the convention we most deprecate. The parents of Jane were very poor, which is according to the pattern, her gown was patched, though clean, and she was twelve years old. Her story is told by her pastor, and, all the proprieties being thus observed, we are not surprised to learn that his discourses on religion were interesting to poor Jane. His teaching was illustrated by the graveyard, which, he says, became "a kind of book of instruction and every grave-stone a leaf of edification" to the group of children to whom he taught the epitaphs. He found Jane peculiarly apt in memorizing such joyful verse as this:

"Forgive, blest shade, the tributary tear,  
That mourns thy exit from a world like this;  
Forgive the wish that would have kept thee here,  
And stayed thy progress to the world of bliss."

By preference, we are told, Jane liked better the following:

"There is an hour when I must die,  
Nor do I know how soon 'Twill come;  
A thousand children young as I,  
Are called by Death to hear their doom."

Is it any wonder Jane followed the example thus printed on her tender mind? After pages and pages of edifying discourse on such themes, the little girl went into a "decline", as it was called, and died, meekly repeating with her last breath the required answers to the searching questions pressed upon her by her zealous examiner.

"The Young Cottager" was addressed to half-grown readers, but the same gruesome diet was administered to much smaller folk. In a set of booklets mis-called "The Children's Friend"—(they measure but 4 by 2½ inches, showing how tiny were the hands which were to hold them) we may find whole chunks made from the same recipe. There is a faint effort to engage the infant interest in these "Friends", for the tales are short, and frequently changed in ostensible subject, but they are as alike as two peas in intention. We open No. 11 at random and find an account of a shipwreck, that must have seemed promising to a small boy, until the adventure flattened out into the lamentations of the sole survivor, a young lad, over losing his one treasure, his mother's last letter, because it "contained such good advice." And how disheartening to the reader to be told that the only reward this filial feeling won was the gift of "several religious tracts", instead of the shirt that was probably needed! In conclusion this moral remark is appended to the tale: "What an encouragement this circumstance affords to





mothers to go forward writing to their sons who are embarked on the boisterous ocean."

Another "Friend" offers a narrative of another storm at sea that threatened a coal barge. The young prig of a cabin boy, rebuked the despairing captain and crew with this appropriate thought, "It is now Tuesday evening, 8 o'clock, there is a prayer-meeting and I know they will not forget us!" This had a powerful effect upon the captain and, roused to fresh exertions, all were saved from a watery grave.

These narratives belong to the most entertaining variety offered. Many more lack even so much sugar coating, and the thoughts of the tomb color them all. Nearly every child described dies before the end, and the central idea is always that of Watt's prayer for the use of infancy: "This tongue that is now invoking Thee must shortly be silent in the grave,—and these hands that now are lifted to Thee, most high God, for mercy, must shortly be moldering in the dust." One hardly knows whether it is pitiful or displeasing to perceive how honestly these writers were expressing their real convictions, and how ruthlessly they dealt with the young minds they sought to reach. To point the moral they spared no detail of disease or physical misery, with queer gusto dwelling on all the possible elements of poverty and distress, of sorrow and bodily abuse. Every abominable misfortune that can happen to helpless childhood is employed for the purpose of illustrating doctrine. Each circumstance is nicely calculated to enhance the advantage of making a swift escape from this unhappy world, also, provided the dying act is made with the proper degree of faith in the accepted dogmas of Calvinism.

Though the pattern became frayed as time went on, yet the habit of piety persisted even when it had degenerated into dismal piousity. It was as late as in 1859 that this account of a birthday party was written. It began with Psalm singing, followed by readings from the Scripture and a long dissertation on the religious duties of children delivered by the pastor as chief guest, which was so much enjoyed by his small listeners, the book says, that it "caused their young bosoms to beat with tender emotions of delight and gratitude." The presentation of a Bible to the six-year old object of the celebration was the end of the program, and the little guests were allowed to relax, enough to eat and — even to dance! In extenuation of this modern break with strict tradition, the comment is made that "not one of the whole troop had ever heard the name of the stately minuet, the luxurious waltz, but in the innocence of their artless bosoms lay a moral grace and harmony which are not always found in the voluptuous mazes of the fashionable dances."





The stuff translated from the French was largely based on the same mawkish sentimentality. Here is one about a child in Switzerland whose mother dies in several long, drawn out chapters, and before the reader recovers from this tearful event little Sophie is also swept into the grave. Still another narrates the story of a school festival given by a kind Baroness to a group of girls, who are to compete for a prize given to the one whose flower decorations win first approval. The intolerably virtuous heroine of the tale, called "the lily of the valley", because she chose that modest flower for her chaplet when her mates wove theirs from the "gaudy tulips and flaunting roses", won the prize, of course, but she was so unbearably meek about it we feel almost a shock to read of the elaborate funeral she was given when she is killed off in the customary manner. All the demands of the occasion are satisfied when her faded wreath of lilies is placed on her bier, however.

If we turn to verse for the young, hoping the exigencies of metre or rhyme may mitigate the rigors of morality, we find such collections as "The Cowslip" or "The Daisy", whose pleasant titles are corrected by their sub-title "Cautionary Verse." Lured by the illustrations, a questing child was urged to meditate on Lydia, who,

"Observing what at school she's taught,  
Turns her toes as children ought",  
and though  
"Some children, when they write, we know,  
Their ink about them, heedless, throw,  
But she, though young, had learned to think,  
That clothes look spoiled with spots of ink."

We do not forget the ever-delightful versifying of Jane and Anne Taylor, whose robust common-sense tempered their profitable rhymes, nor our own Phoebe Cary, who almost wrote poetry for young folk, but there was far too much of narrative verse like "The Mother's Last Words", from which one fragment may suffice:

"Listen John, before 'tis night,  
My weary spirit will be free;  
Then go and tell the overseer,  
For he must come and bury me."

This dreadful, long ditty was published from the 24th English Edition of which 240,000 were printed.

Enough! Let us refrain from any further specimens of the sort. Though preparation for death was the paramount idea, it was recognized that the natural world required some atten-





tion, and education of the mind was provided, after a fashion. Not that much effort was made to adorn the pursuit of knowledge. The pages of purely secular instruction are sprinkled thick with such entertaining remarks as this: "Emulation is a noble sentiment that dignifies the bosom it is permitted to govern" and "The acquisition of knowledge is indeed, my child, one of the highest satisfactions of the human mind." The girl to whom this enthusiastic statement is addressed makes the singular response: "I can never be tired of such comfortable chat." In 1816 "The Key to Knowledge", in the form of a series of "Dialogues written by a Mother", was concocted for the happy purpose of giving succinct facts about such cognate subjects as cheese and salt-petre, tapioca and rubber, varied with the properties of steam and how to make beaver hats—all of which topics proved so interesting to the Mother's child that he exclaimed, "How many delights does eyesight alone give us!" Of a slightly earlier date was an Astronomical and Geographical Chatechism, in which the writer, one Caleb Brigham, propounded such questions as; "What are the most curious birds?" to the answer,—"The Humming bird, the Whip-poor-will, and pelican." To another question about the principal animals, the appended answer avers that "The mammoth, is the largest, but whether any of them are now living is uncertain." Another nugget of wisdom assures the little learner "The earth is round, because it is the shape best suited to motion."

Almost any miscellaneous statement seemed to be valuable to these mostly anonymous writers, whether it concerned the character of the elk, described as "timorous and gentle", or the goat, "an animal that seems to be a middle species between the deer and the sheep", or the cat, "whose body conforms to its disposition, which is naturally fond of voluptuous ease", or "The larger animals who obtrude themselves continually upon our sight but who form the smallest part of animated nature" . . . every subject is but one more item for bestowing "comfortable chat" upon the helpless child.

Here in our own neighborhood the publisher Phelps of Greenfield was responsible for the furtherance of this sort of information. He brought out a series of little books called "The Pleasing Instructor", where miscalled historical subjects added their confusion to youth, such as an account of Edward Third of England refusing to "put his foot upon the Bible, as his wicked courtiers were trying to persuade him to do", and other stories equally true! Phelps also printed in a "Child's Cabinet" a more strictly Puritan point of view, when its anonymous author righteously says "the King of England wears a crown in whose attainment deeds of blood and murder at which humanity





revolts have been committed without fear or reason." In spite of these crimes several pages follow the sanguinary beginning with a list of all the titles of British aristocracy from duke to gentleman, which seems to show more interest in the class system than is quite fitting for a good American child to be encouraged to feel.

The number of books of kindred purpose and negligible value written and printed in the early 1800's attests to the fact of our real love of reading, more than to any other worth they possess. And it must be remembered that while much that was banal, and a sad amount which was harmful was contained in these books for the young there were others which provided real food for their consumption. How much old Lindley Murray had to do with changing piousness into practical morality, we cannot estimate, but in the substantial fare he presented to school children through his much-used *English Reader* there is so high a degree of excellence we must regard him as a true reformer. Many small sufferers, distressed or bored by sickly tales of death and misery, we may be sure welcomed the Reader's classical excerpts from Greek and Roman orators, the long quotations out of Milton and Addison and Samuel Johnson; and that they were read with enough understanding to form a part in the real education of children before 1840 is shown by the vocabulary they enriched so greatly. Not for our grandparents were the few words we now use to convey our meaning! Their common speech, with its chosen adjectives, its neatly descriptive epithets, its individual tang of expression would scorn our trivial mode, for they had learned the beauty and variety of what was then spoken of respectfully, as "the English language." And for this the Reader was largely responsible.

After 1830 there was a gradual improvement in taste, and the next twenty years, fashions in writing changed, as in other things. Though the sentimental style of story-telling persisted for a tedious long while, and did not disappear entirely until after the almost recent date of the "*Elsie Dinsmore Series*", yet literary values were increasingly demanded and children shared in the general response of writers. A tribute is due to Jacob Abbot's contribution. He did much to promote the movement toward giving young people real facts, and in his homely way he presented them in an agreeable form. If his *Rollo* seems a bit of the old pattern for a good boy, and his *Ellen* a trifle too angelic, his *Jonas* and *Beechnut* (above all his *Jonas*) have preserved for us a true picture of that by-gone institution of farm-life,—the self-respecting and respected "hired man". When writers who knew how to write began to spend their gifts for the sake of young people, and magazines for their reading





were published, the modern world as we know it began. The change is definite in every thing, but in no direction is it more marked than in the matter we have been considering.

How far this difference was due to a natural rebound, how far this altered mode, was helped and conditioned by the mental fare dished out to the child of a hundred years ago, remains an unanswered question, for we cannot know how much he really read, marked and inwardly digested. When little John Williams of Deerfield perused the "Adventures of Master Humphrey and Mrs. Patience", or "The Road to Happiness" did he profit by it as his parents doubtless hoped he would in buying it for him? It is a far cry to 1786, and the effect upon his disposition of this moral truth

"Experience may those ills assuage,  
Which owe their birth to Passion's rage!"

we shall never guess. Just as those same children, ranging the countryside for new sensations, chewed birch bark, or slippery "ellum", or sassafras root, or horse radish, and tasted every berry that grew, with eclectic gusto, and untroubled appetite, so very probably, they swallowed these books, dull and dolorous alike, without special application to their own affairs or conduct, and comfortably forgot them.

Good and less-good, well intentioned or mistaken, ignorant or even wise—of all these unread books we turn over for a passing hour, there is nothing left, except this question of their effect. Probably it was small. The stern demands of the common life of our ancestors left little room for the "flowers of sentiment", and when those children were grown and called upon to play their part, they pursued their way with ambitious energy and fortitude, forgetting the tears they may have shed over deathbed scenes, and the tedious exhortations of their spiritual advisers. They built and they plowed, they crossed the mountains and settled the prairies, but those books were not lasting factors in the great game of subduing the country. The women who wore sunbonnets and cooked at campfires without complaint, the men who drove covered wagons across deserts, were once the tiny tots who read the tale of the boy who was too scriptural to fight the bully who struck him, or listened to silly effusions on the charms of melancholy.

Which is a reflection that offers consolation to the older people today who lament the untrammelled freedom of choice exercised by the young of this generation. It may suggest that what our juniors get from the printed word does not produce a great or lasting result of any sort, when they are confronted by their own problems. For good or ill, it is living that teaches growing minds, in every age, and under all conditions.





# ANNUAL MEETING—1936

## REPORT

On Tuesday, February 25th, 1936, the 66th annual meeting of the Memorial Association was held in the Council Room in Memorial Hall, Vice President Thompson presiding. Mrs. Sheldon read her annual report as Curator, recording the receipt of 136 articles by the Sheldon Collection during the past year. Financial reports were also made and accepted and all *officers* were reelected. The President was authorized to appoint a committee to consider amendments to the constitution. Judge Thompson read the tribute to Fred H. Tucker of Newton, a deceased member, written by his daughter. Mrs. Sheldon then read a paper, "Wanderers", which revealed her scientific and persistent investigation of a chosen subject — in this instance a "large, grooved Indian axe."

Judge Thompson presided over the evening session and read and commented upon "An Old Scrap of Paper" upon which his great-grandfather's cousin, great-grandson of Godfrey Nims, had penned a record of the first Nims family. Miss Flora White spoke on "Fort Shirley—Its Significance", Frederick Johnson of Harvard University presented a valuable account of "The Indians of Eastern North America" and Mrs. Mark Winslow Potter read her "Brief History of the old Rice-Warner House in Charlemont", of which we are unable to obtain a copy.

The presiding officer said "It was in this town hall that our association was organized May 26, 1870, with its founder George Sheldon as President. The Vice Presidents were Josiah D. Canning, 'the peasant bard', of Gill, and James M. Crafts of Whately. Rev. Dr. Crawford was the Corresponding Secretary and 'Deacon Nat' Hitchcock, of the Albany road, was Recording Secretary and Treasurer. At the first annual meeting of the Association, on the last Tuesday of February, 1871, it was 'Voted to hold a field meeting at Charlemont the coming summer' and at that field meeting, August second, 1871, a monument to Moses Rice and Phineas Arms, presented by Orlando B. Potter, was dedicated."

Of the speakers, Mrs. Potter and Professor Johnson, the Vice President said: "The family of Orlando B. Potter, as you will learn tonight, has not lost interest in the history of Charlemont or ceased to protect the memorials of its first settlers. Rachel Field has written, 'Long, long ago, through this same





pane of glass Eyes peered for Indians; saw trappers pass'; and tonight we are to peer through a window in that wall which separates our time from the past, and we shall see "The Indians of Eastern North America" and events which concerned Moses Rice and the old buttonwood tree by the Indian spring in Charlemont; but first we will hear the ever fresh and delightful voice of one more than twice our own age — Deerfield Academy, the first owner and occupant of our Memorial Hall." After singing by the Glee Club, the historical papers were read to an appreciative audience.

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## REPORT OF CURATOR

The experience of many years is the authority for the statement that *weather* is a potent factor in determining the number of visitors at Memorial Hall. The weather in 1935 was unfavorable. May was unusually cold, June was unusually rainy, the press stating that there was more or less rain in twenty-one out of twenty-eight days. July by the same authority was "the hottest and stickiest July since 1925", and August certainly could testify to many lifeless days. Doubtless this record, with the prevailing depression throughout the country, reduced the attendance at the Hall to 4,371.

Notwithstanding these facts, the visitors registered from 44 States of the Union. Among these there were five States which are seldom represented; these were New Mexico, Utah, Mississippi, South Dakota and Arizona. Visitors also registered from thirteen foreign countries, including Egypt, India, Burma, China, Japan, and the Philippine and Hawaiian Islands.

Every collection of any considerable size calls for the accomplishment of major and minor objects. The major objects are considered first, and often they require years for their completion, while the minor objects have to patiently bide their time. The larger objects of our collection having been accomplished, some of the minor objects have claimed our thought the past year.

The Reverend John Williams' Cupboard with its beautiful china has been protected in the past by ordinary wire. This has been removed, the Cupboard restored, and a large glass plate fastened to the wooden frame just outside the Cupboard. This plate is much to be preferred to doors, and was devised by Mr. Fred A. Loomis of Greenfield. The Cupboard is now practically dustproof, so that the annual washing of the rare china will cease.





The autograph quilt which was given the Association by the Hazen Missionary Family, and which had crossed the ocean four times, was found to be very tender. It needed protection, so that a large box with glass front was made, the quilt hung in it, and the box securely fastened to the wall. This is at the head of the rear stairs near the bedroom.

In the Room of Domestic Productions additional space for exhibition has been gained by placing glass doors in the lower sections of Cases G and H.

The Association has received 136 contributions. By the Will of Francis J. Kellogg of Shelburne and Utica, N. Y. it has been given a "writing chair" and warming pan. The chair belonged to Reverend Theophilus Packard who was born in Shelburne in 1767. It is an interesting representative of its kind, and is in a state of perfect preservation. The warming pan belonged originally to Betsy Dole Kellogg, grandmother of the donor.

Another valuable contribution is a package of rare manuscripts relating to Godfrey Nims and his heirs. These have come to us from Mr. Frederick C. Nims of Painesville, Ohio, a Life Member of this Association who died in 1921.

Mr. Joseph L. Harrison, Librarian of the Forbes Library in Northampton, and a member of this Association has presented us with large, framed portraits of his grandfather and grandmother, Elihu Smead Hawks 1801-1879 and Sophia Elizabeth Abby, 1812-1876. These strong, vital faces are an inspiring addition to the Picture and Manuscript Room in the Fireproof Wing.

The Rochester Historical Society of New York has sent a photograph of the Moses Anvil in their possession, bearing the date of 1632. The Society thinks this maybe the oldest implement in the country.

While Memorial Hall is sacred to all lovers of the Past, her stately companions towering above her are also sacred, and deserve to be appreciated. These trees have been pruned, fed and sprayed for years so that they are now in as good condition as it is possible to make them. Somehow they seem in perfect harmony with our ancient brick Memorial.

The assistant, Miss Mellen, has catalogued the "Juvenile Library" of seventy-two books, the gift of Miss Margaret C. Whiting. These have been placed most attractively in a case by themselves in the Library.

Miss Mellen's care of the Hall and her unfailing constancy are deserving the genuine praise of the Association.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON.

Deerfield, February 25, 1936.





# ANNUAL MEETING—1937

## REPORT

Mrs. J. M. Arms Sheldon was re-elected President of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association at its 67th annual meeting on February 23, 1937. Vice President Thompson, Treasurer Nichols, Recording Secretary William L. Harris and Corresponding Secretary N. Theresa Mellen were also re-elected. The widely known writer, Edward E. Whiting of Newton, was elected as a vice president to fill the vacancy caused by the death of John C. Chase, long president of the New England Historic Genealogical Society.

Winthrop P. Abbott, Frances N. S. Allen, Margaret Harris Allen, Jonathan P. Ashley, Ellen StClaire Birks, Helen Childs Boyden, Mary W. Fuller, Minnie E. Hawks, Charles W. Hazelton, Clair F. Luther, Margaret Miller, Hazel Sheldon Nichols, Agnes P. Sheldon, Elizabeth H. Wells and Margaret C. Whiting were elected as members of the council.

Mrs. Sheldon's report as curator showed that the condition of the highway through Old Deerfield had lessened the attendance at Memorial Hall, but that visitors had come from 42 states and 13 foreign countries to see the collection. Among the year's contributions were a sketch in oils of Charles H. Ashley, life member of the Association, painted and donated by William Hutchins, and two books of especial interest, both by ministers: "The Hadley Chest" by Rev. Clair F. Luther, one of our council, and "Boyhood Memories of Old Deerfield" by Rev. Frank W. Pratt, a life member.

Tributes to three deceased members, John C. Chase, Alice H. D. Peterson and George Arthur Plimpton, were read at the afternoon meeting, and also a note from Mrs. Elizabeth H. Wells, in regard to Curtis B. Wells who was born in Deerfield in 1834.

"I am sending two rather curious little papers which Curtis Baker (C.B.) Wells edited and printed while marching and countermarching in Virginia during his service as a volunteer soldier in the Civil War. He was the brother next younger than Edward Wells.

"When the Civil War broke out he was editing a democratic paper in a border town in Connecticut. Of course his 'occupation' was gone. He enlisted for three years service in the Union Army, was taken prisoner by Confederate troops and spent several months in a prison in Richmond. When his captors thought he was dying of consumption they exchanged him. He came to his home in Deerfield where his mother and sister, Helen Wells who became Mrs. Chandler Field, took care of him. Mrs. Field lived in Conway until her death in 1917.





"I have written all this rather rambling family history to assure everyone that C. B. Wells was to us all a very important and delightful member of our family circle. He was a dear brother-in-law to me and a devoted uncle to my little children. I wanted it known that he really 'belonged'. He learned the printer's trade at the same time as James Pratt. They were close friends always.

ELIZABETH H. WELLS."

Another friend of the Memorial Association wrote:

"You don't know what a disappointment it is to me that I have to miss the P.V.M.A. banquet this year. It's the first time for over 40 years that I have missed these festivities.

"If I'd been the first man who came over the mountain and looked down on our valley I would have chosen it too; wouldn't you? The savages might have known it was no hunting ground for them after an Englishman had looked at it.

"I know I've loved and enjoyed every aspect of it all these years that I have been privileged to live in it.

"I hope you have a very nice and interesting meeting. Remember me to inquiring friends."

And it was voted that the P.V.M.A. send its affectionate greetings and heartiest good wishes to Miss Margaret Miller who has often seasoned our feasts of reason.

The women of Deerfield, under the able leadership of Mrs. Henry C. Wells, served a bounteous supper in the town hall; and the evening program opened with singing by the Glee Club, an annual contribution by the academy which is much appreciated. Four historical papers were presented by their authors; the first, an interesting story of "Old Shelburne Taverns", being by Mrs. Stanley Cummings of Shelburne Falls. The others were by a probate judge, a writer of history and genealogy and a register of deeds: the judge looked from Shelburne Mountain into the Green River Valley and reviewed three generations who had marched through it in Indian times, and five later to whom it had been home; the historian told of vicissitudes encountered by ambitious young men in obtaining education in by-gone days; and the register told some stories which the public records reveal or suggest.

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## REPORT OF CURATOR

The work the past year has been chiefly on our collection of newspapers. April 10, 1936, the Association received a letter from Miss Winifred Gregory of the Library of Congress which read, in part, as follows: "Under the auspices of the Bibliographical Society of America newspaper files in the libraries of the United States and Canada are being recorded in a Union





List of Newspapers. It is designed to meet the needs of scholars who are frequently unaware of the location of valuable source material. The List will include files of papers published in this country since 1820, and all foreign papers on file. Will you list the papers you keep permanently with the dates of each? Please indicate the file in as great detail as possible. Important single issues should also be listed."

When this letter was received we had many bound volumes of newspapers, and a large number of unbound papers. The latter were arranged in paper folios on each of which was written the contents of the folio. This record, however, would not be satisfactory, either to the Library of Congress or the Union List of Newspapers, so a new arrangement was undertaken. As the letter did not give definite information in regard to just what was needed, it seemed wise to make a complete catalogue of all the papers. This was done, and the catalogue sent to Miss Gregory; later it was given to the Library of Congress. A most appreciative letter was received from the Librarian, Mr. Herbert Putnam.

Afterward another catalogue was made for our Association, giving the location of each paper, whether in a bound volume in the erect case, or among the unbound papers in a drawer.

Both of these catalogues were made with the help of the curator by Mrs. Jeannie P. Doggett, whose skill and ability to accomplish an object, when begun, regardless of obstacles, are deserving the genuine praise of the Association.

Our catalogue contains the following interesting information:

We have 70 bound volumes. These contain 4756 newspapers. The number of unbound papers is 1200, making a total of 5956, (almost 6000) papers. Most of these were published in Boston, Springfield, Greenfield, Deerfield, Northampton and New York. There are a few Southern papers and several miscellaneous specimens from various localities.

The oldest newspaper in the Collection is the "New England Weekly Journal" of April 8, 1728; the next oldest is "The Boston Gazette and Country Journal" of Oct. 16, 1758.

Greenfield has often changed the name of its paper. The oldest we have is "The Impartial Intelligencer" of Feb. 29, 1792. On Sept. 27, of the same year, the "Greenfield Gazette" appeared. Then follows through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a long but not complete file of papers under nine different titles till we come to our beloved "Gazette and Courier", July 20, 1841, and the last issue, June 24, 1932.

The Greenfield paper, published in Deerfield, in 1831 and '32, was "The Franklin Freeman."

In addition to the newspapers there is a large number of packages containing newspaper articles on special subjects,





covering the period from 1728 to 1932. Most of these packages were preserved by George Sheldon, Founder and President of this Association from 1870 to 1916.

We hope certainly that this Collection of newspapers with the catalogue may prove helpful to students.

Owing to extremely unfavorable conditions existing in Old Deerfield through the warm months the number of visitors at Memorial Hall dropped to 3854. Surprising to relate these registered from 42 States of the Union and 13 foreign countries.

Eighty-one contributions have been received. One of the most valuable is the oil portrait of Mr. Charles H. Ashley, a Life Member of this Association. This portrait was painted by Mr. William Hutchins of Washington, D. C. who is the generous contributor.

Another gift is the volume entitled "The Hadley Chest" by Rev. Clair F. Luther. As this book has something to say in regard to four chests in Memorial Hall it will be placed in the alcove "About Deerfield" (N) in our library.

Our most recent gift is from Rev. Frank W. Pratt, a Life Member of the Association. It is his lately published book on "Boyhood Memories of Old Deerfield." Charmingly written, it is both interesting and valuable, revealing the life of a boy in Old Deerfield in the nineteenth century. This book will find a place in the "Deerfield Authors" alcove (M).

The Kitchen in Memorial Hall has received the gift of a glass case which will protect the dishes from breakage and also from dust.

The assistant, Miss Mellen, has continued her faithful and efficient efforts in behalf of the Association.

Respectfully submitted,

J. M. ARMS SHELDON.

Deerfield, Feb. 23, 1937.

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## MY VIEW OF THE VALLEY

*By Francis Nims Thompson*

From a cabin beneath a pine, on the crest of that range which the red men called the Sunsick hills, I look down upon the lovely little valley of Green river: not the Green river of which Bryant wrote, but as beautiful a stream and running through a valley rich in history.

From High Pine I look down upon my childhood, my mother's childhood, the lives of her father and grandfather, the farm to





which her great-grandfather came from Deerfield, and upon the trail tramped by the feet of three earlier generations when this valley was just beyond the northwestern frontier. I see a great deal there, as I gaze upon the white farm-house, the fertile fields, the tree-bordered river and the Colrain road running through "Greenfield Meadows."

My Grandfather Nims died in 1879, and in mudtime of the next year (there was such a season in those days) the family left the farm, on which my grandfather's grandfather had settled so long ago, and moved to the village. I was a little boy then: I do not remember how long my parents and I lived on the farm, and there is no one left to tell me; but I do remember my grandmother's lilacs and garden, the flowering quince and the apple orchard, south of the house; and I recall the great maples beneath which I played, the snow-cruised fields on which I slid, the mysterious ram at a spring below a side hill and near it an old tree in whose hollow I could stand; and the district school which I for a time attended in the "Lower Meadows", not far from the cemetery in which sleep five generations of the Nims family.

An octagonal bowl, now in my own room, then stood filled with apples in the cupboard behind a door in "the south room", and there are other memories of things and persons within the large square white house. Indeed, the long lounge on which I sit looking down on the valley and back on the past, then stood against the north wall of my grandparents' dining room, and in my home is much of their furniture.

But I look further back, and in the green valley I see my mother's girlhood; and its incidents are clear, not only to me but to a host who were children during the last three-score years,—for she was "Lois", the daughter of "Mr. Whitaker", and her brothers were "Roy" and "Chetty", and her cousins were "Millie" and "Teddy" and "Ralph Kendall", and spread before us is the enchanted vale of the "Jolly Good Times." That district school when I attended is the very same over which "Miss Gabriel" presided. That brook, which drained my grandfather's swamp, is the one over which Lois and Millie sat in the willow with every intention to study their lessons.

In my copy of "Jolly Good Times at School" I have inserted a composition which Millie wrote on "The Old Schoolhouse." She dated it "Friday, Jan. 1st, 1858" and signed it "Mary P. Wells" — for *she* was "Millie", author of the composition and of the Jolly Good Times books and many others. It was a good composition for a girl of seventeen and a half years and has been for seventy-nine years awaiting publication, so I think it should no longer be denied that honor. !





"THE OLD SCHOOLHOUSE would not have served as a model for an architect, nor would it have attracted the eye of the passing stranger for its beauty. It was a little square red box, standing beside the road, with no tree or shrub near to protect its suffering inmates from the scorching warmth of the midsummer's sun. In fact, it was a perfect sample of the generality of New England schoolhouses. At a short distance from it ran a brook, rippling over its pebbly bed with a pleasant murmur, and o'er it hung a large willow. Ah! if that willow could only speak how many a story could it tell of the happy children who passed so many pleasant hours beneath its shade! We always spent our noons there — swinging on the branches, building dams and bridges, catching fish etc. Even if one of us did fall in occasionally, it did not *dampen* our *mirth* but rather increased it. There was not a spot in the surrounding woods and fields, that we had not thoroughly explored. We knew where to search for the first May-flowers of Spring, half hidden under the dead leaves and grass, and only betrayed by their fragrant breath. We knew where the wintergreen berries and black birch grew, and when the first strawberries might be looked for. But when cold Winter came, spreading his snowy mantle o'er the shivering earth, our sports were changed for others of quite a different character. Our fleet sleds bore us down the steep hills and over the slippery crust as swiftly as the birds fly. The ponds clad in Winter's icy armor, offered excellent opportunities for skating, to the boys, and perhaps it will shock some of the fastidious people of the present day, to know that we girls sometimes participated in this pleasant amusement. We played fox and geese in the snow, we rolled up huge snowballs, and built forts, palaces and statues.

Now doubtless this will give you an idea we did not learn much; that we were rude, boisterous etc. Well, I hardly think that we had *enough* knowledge drilled into our heads to hurt us, but we gained good health, the most precious of all blessings."

Certainly Mary P. Wells Smith did gain good health. She was 75 or older when, as we were walking from the brook-road to Shelburne toward this cabin and came to a wall, she refused to allow me to let down the bars for her passage: after a dinner at High Pine, she spread a blanket on the ground and lay down upon it for her afternoon nap: and when she was near the end of her ninety vigorous years she said to me "My mother used to have sick headaches — I never had a headache in my life." It was in 1877 that the first of her score of books was published: yes, from my cabin on the hill I can see into the past, and those little figures along the road between the red schoolhouse and the Whittaker and Kendall farms seem to me those of Millie and Lois and their mates.

Along a dusty road in that valley a pair of heavy work-horses is drawing a woodsled, and two school-girls, Mary Nims and Mary Wells, "catch on behind." The kindly-faced young man who is driving proves to be Frank Thompson from "Country Farms" — a region known to the girls as the home of some of the families who come each Sunday to the North Parish meeting-house to hear "Uncle Chandler" preach,—Mrs. Chandler being the aunt for whom Mary Nims was named.

I see but dimly Uncle Henry Nims marching off to the Civil War, though I have his sword and his commissions signed by





Lincoln and Johnson. I have heard that he was a daring officer, paying troops while under fire; and the youngest paymaster in the Union Army, though they seem to have considered him mature enough to draw from the treasury in New York \$3,500,000 "in notes of suitable denominations for the payment of the Army" and deliver it to the "Chief Paymaster of the District of the South" twelve days later. I have his father's curved sword also, though he was but a militia officer, and I visualize his great frame as he plays with a fine dog having adoring eyes, or drives a promising young horse.

My eyes discover the church in which Dr. Chandler preached, and there are the great slabs of slate which when Greenfield was young were brought from Charlemont to the town's *first* meeting-house by Thomas Nims and other farmers of the parish: so I fall to thinking of my grandfather's grandfather. All is excitement about the farmhouse down in the meadows: not the one I so clearly see there, and which I know was built in 1810, but the older house which I see when my eyes are closed.

It is the period of the American Revolution, and reverberations of the shot heard around the world have reached this home in the peaceful valley. Thomas Nims and his son Hull are starting for Concord; and Esther, the wife and mother, stands at the south door long after her men have disappeared down the road leading toward Greenfield village. The dust of the highway is blown by a southwesterly breeze over the meadow which stretches away to Green River, but there is still a haze before her eyes as she turns to take up the work which always awaits New England housewives and the mothers of men.

But a month ago my Cousin Charles showed me the flintlock musket upon whose wood was carved the names of Thomas and Hull Nims, and beneath those the names of the next two generations, Thomas Nims II\* and Hull Nims II,—grandfather and uncle of Charles W. To me, Hull Nims and his wife, our great-grandparents, are the life-sized silhouettes which hang in my home. Life-like they are, too; his profile revealing a need of substitutes for natural teeth, and hers showing some comfortable chins; but withall a most worthy pair of ancestors. I fear that Madam Hannah Nims was rheumatic, for there has come down to me the wooden arm-rest which used to sit conveniently beside her in their pew in the old meeting-house where her brother Reverend Roger Newton preached for more than a half-century before 1816.

\*It was Thomas Nims II who was chairman of the board of county commissioners which built the court-house of 1848 on the site of the mansion of his uncle, minister of all Greenfield. He died the following year; and his brother, Lucius Nims, my grandfather, became commissioner in his stead.





But back of these five generations there were three others; and, strangely enough, it is these remote figures whom I can see most plainly. It is to the founder of this Association that I am indebted for the thrilling vision. With what patience did George Sheldon piece together the mosaic which pictures for us the ancient pageants enacted in the valley below!

We look back into the summer of 1712 and see the father of Thomas the Greenfield settler — John Nims of Deerfield — as one of a party which, under command of Lieutenant Samuel Williams, marches northward in July, disappears into the wilderness and in September returns with nine persons who had been captive in distant Canada. We cannot know the privations and perils of such a journey in that period.

It was in May and June 1705 that John Nims had taken with Joseph Petty that long and laborious journey of three hundred miles, by boat or raft and on foot, escaping from their Canadian captivity but reaching Deerfield half crazed by suffering and more than half starved.

John is not among the many who, northward bound, are camping amid deep snow in the valley below — one day out of Deerfield. The date is familiar to us — the last Tuesday of February — and we are looking back 233 years and looking down upon our kindred, their neighbors and their French and Indian captors. John's brother and sister are there, with his wife-to-be. Others of his family lie dead in Deerfield, and his half-sister and his step-mother are slain on the merciless march. There are too many women and children there, and we turn our eyes away.

Back of that, about four months further into the past, we see two sturdy young men — John Nims and his half-brother Zebediah Williams — hurried toward Canada by the group of Indians who ambushed and captured these white men as they went in the evening a little way from home to look after cattle.

But most remote, and most dramatic of all, because of the terrible suspense and awful risk of the desperate adventure, is this midnight processional in the spring of 1676. Among the 140 men marching through the vale are William Smead and Godfrey Nims of Deerfield, great-grandfathers of Thomas and Hull Nims of Greenfield, armed for battle as those great-grandsons will be just a century later. Will there never be peace?

This little army have marched with Captain William Turner from Hatfield, some on foot and some mounted. They have passed the scene of the Bloody Brook Ambush where other subjects of their king — their kinsmen, acquaintances and "the very flower of the County of Essex" — were slain but a few months before, and they have sworn to avenge their death.





They had also to pass the site of the Pocumtuck settlement, just beginning to be called Deerfield, where fighting men were killed and buildings and crops burned by the savage enemy whom they are to attack at daybreak. They have been wet by a shower as they marched through the darkness, not knowing when the warwhoop might sound around them. A torch had flared forth at Pine Hill, and they fear that red men may have discovered them and sent swift messengers to the horde of savages encamped at Peskeompskut, the fishing falls.

But the die is cast: they have determined to risk all — their families and the future of the northwestern frontier — upon the blow they are about to strike. So they march on through the valley below, through the night and through the Indian-infested wilderness; watched by the fate that views the progress of Civilization. Up the valley of the Picomegan — our Green River, across the great swamp, down the brook that drains it, across Fall River, and they leave their horses with a guard.

They have left our valley and come out into that of the great River — our Connecticut. You can see it gleam over there, just above the Poet's Seat range. It is behind that rocky ridge that white men are presently to be moved against red, in the contest that Civilization and Savagery are to wage for a long eighty years in this region.

The white men, crouched waiting on the hillside, begin to see the first faint flush of dawn. The red, gorged with their catch at the fishing falls, and careless and contemptuous of the whites whom they have despoiled of their cattle, sleep soundly in their great camp. Cautiously the settlers creep among the sleeping savages; swiftly and surely they strike. Their hope is to dispatch enough of the red men, in the beginning of the attack, so that the opposing bands may be more nearly equal in number. Canoes are bringing the natives reinforcements from islands and farther shore and there is fearful slaughter of both red men and white. Beyond the rocky ridge sounds the roar of the falls, the discharge of muskets, the savage yells and shrieks. The colonists retreat and are pursued by the Indians.

Now both reappear in our Valley; the enemy are picking off the stragglers and Captain Turner is shot as his horse mounts the bank on this side of the river. Forty of our men have been slain. Among the hundred survivors are William Smead and Godfrey Nims. In the valley below us the retreat becomes more orderly as Captain Holyoke takes command, but the red men pursue as far as the bars in the meadow fence below Deerfield.

The news is told to those who prayed by hearth and cradle, and there is weeping and rejoicing. This is the nineteenth day of May, 1676; it is *spring* in the virgin valley below, and it





awaits, green and unchanged, the next pageant of progress;  
awaits sowing and reaping by the hand of Nature and by the  
hand of Providence.

## THE VALLEY

Beneath a pine upon the wooded hill  
I laid myself to dream and idly gaze  
Below. I sought to penetrate the haze  
Above the valley there, which seemed to fill  
With ancient kindred, and events both ill  
And good. I saw within the moving maze  
The tragic deeds of all those early days  
Along that trail, where it is now so still.

And there I saw the valley's placid stream;  
The fields that made my old ancestors strong.  
My grandsire tall was there; and in my dream  
One young, but like my mother, I watched long.  
I saw the district school, and had a gleam  
Of pebbly brook — I hope I caught its song.





# ANNUAL MEETING—1938

## REPORT

Tuesday, February 22nd, at one o'clock in the afternoon, a Special Meeting of the Council was held in the northwest ground-floor room of Memorial Hall, where it had so often met with Mrs. Sheldon. She was now constantly in the mind of each member, her name often upon their lips. There were present Vice President Thompson, Treasurer Nichols, Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen, Mrs. Margaret Harris Allen, Jonathan P. Ashley, Mrs. Helen C. Boyden, Mrs. Mary W. Fuller, Mrs. Hazel Sheldon Nichols and Miss Margaret C. Whiting. Mrs. Margaret Harris Allen was made secretary of the meeting.

The presiding officer suggested consideration of leaving vacant during 1938 the presidency of the Memorial Association, but it was felt that this would not be the wish of Mrs. Sheldon. The future of the Association was discussed with a determined optimism. An amended constitution,—incorporating among other things, conditions attached to Mrs. Sheldon's bequest in memory of her late husband, the historian of Deerfield,—was considered and it was unanimously voted that the draft prepared be recommended to the corporation for adoption. The Council then, acting as a nominating committee, unanimously adopted a ballot of officers and trustees to be submitted to the annual meeting.

The annual meeting of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association followed in the same room at two o'clock, Judge Thompson presiding and about fifty persons being present. After hearing and approving the record of the 1937 meeting, the report by Jennie M. Arms Sheldon as curator during that year was read by Miss Mellen, her assistant, and Mr. Nichols reported as treasurer and on behalf of the trustees and the auditors. These reports were accepted.

It was unanimously voted that the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association accepts with profound gratitude the bequest of its beloved President, establishing the George Sheldon Memorial Fund, upon the conditions expressed in her will.

The proposed constitution was then read and it was unanimously voted that the corporation amend its constitution by substituting for its present wording that of the constitution submitted by the Council to the annual meeting for its consideration.





The officers and trustees required by the constitution and by the terms of the several trusts were then elected unanimously by ballot. These were: *President*, Francis Nims Thompson; *First Vice President*, Hazel Sheldon Nichols; *Second Vice President*, Edward E. Whiting; *Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols; *Recording Secretary*, Margaret Harris Allen; and, to serve with the foregoing officers as members of the *Council*,—for the term ending 1941, Frank L. Boyden, Minnie E. Hawks, Margaret Miller and Jane Atherton Wright;—1940, Jonathan P. Ashley, Mary W. Fuller, Clair F. Luther and Margaret C. Whiting;—1939, Frances N. S. Allen, Helen C. Boyden, John W. Heselton and Agnes P. Sheldon.

*George Sheldon Memorial Fund Trustees*—for the term ending 1941, W. Herbert Nichols; 1940, Agnes P. Sheldon; 1939, Frank L. Boyden.

*Sheldon Publishing Fund Trustees*—1941, Hazel Sheldon Nichols; 1940, Margaret C. Whiting; 1939, Jonathan P. Ashley.

*Old Indian House Homestead Trustees*—1946, W. Herbert Nichols; 1942, Margaret Harris Allen; 1940, William L. Harris.

*Charlotte Alice Baker Trustees* for life,—Helen C. Boyden, Margaret Harris Allen and W. Herbert Nichols.

The business having been completed, the meeting heard a tribute to Mrs. M. Anna V. Childs, of the town street of Deerfield, written and read by her daughter Miss Harriet E. Childs. This was followed by an interesting and informing account of the part which Charles W. Hazelton played in the development of Turners Falls, presented by his son Charles E. Hazelton.

The story of "Old Deerfield in the Great Flood of 1936" was told by Miss Margaret Miller in a characteristic vein of quiet humor, and this was supplemented by a charming record by Mrs. Nathalie Ashley Stebbins, of the experiences of her own family during that period. The two papers gave a stereoscopic view of an event unparalleled in the long history of the village.

These papers, with Mrs. Sheldon's report as curator and her autobiography, and addresses given by Col. Dodge and Miss White in the evening, appear on the following pages. The program planned long in advance of the meeting by our late beloved President was followed as closely as might be, but it was necessary to postpone to another meeting a story of "Trails and Traders" by Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen; and to omit a paper on "Building the National Constitution" and the reading of Jonathan A. Saxton's "Ode to Washington", (to be found in Vol. III, on page 471,) with which Mrs. Sheldon had intended that we should celebrate the sesquicentennial of the American Constitution and the birthday of the first president of our country.





The papers on the flood called forth many reminiscences during the interval between the afternoon meeting of the association and a brief annual meeting of the Council at which certain appointments were made. These were: To serve with president and treasurer as an *Executive Committee*, Dr. Frank L. Boyden; *Finance Committee*, Mrs. Nichols, Judge Thompson and John W. Heselton, Esquire; *Committee on Meetings and Program*, Dr. Frank L. Boyden, Mrs. Mary Adams Ball and Mrs. Wright; *Auditors*, John W. Heselton and Hon. Carlos Allen.

The town hall of Deerfield was well filled that evening when Judge Thompson, after a few words concerning Mrs. Sheldon as student and teacher, scientist and writer, historian and benefactor of Deerfield, introduced Professor Avirett whose reading of the revealing record of her life held to its end the close attention of the audience. Because the autobiography is simple and truthful, it is an inspiring story of singleness of purpose, devotion to duty, vital and useful living.

Following this reading, the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy, for which Mrs. Sheldon did so much, gave under the direction of Mr. Oatley several songs, including "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord" which they had often sung for Mrs. Sheldon.

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## REPORT OF CURATOR

### THE LAST REPORT TO THE P.V.M.A.

*By Mrs. Jennie M. Arms Sheldon*

We are glad to report there has been a larger attendance at Memorial Hall in 1937 than in 1936. This is true of every month save May. While the increase has not been large it has shown that the tide is flowing instead of ebbing.

There were 903 visitors in July, the largest number since 1932; 1158 in August, the largest since 1935. The total number is 4598. These people registered from 41 States of the Union, the District of Columbia, and 17 foreign countries.

The Association has received by the Will of Mrs. Eva S. Nims of Painesville, Ohio, the sum of \$1,484. This gift is in memory of her husband, Frederick C. Nims, a Life Member of this Association, and one who was vitally interested in carrying on its work. This legacy has been added to the Permanent





Fund so it will continue to help on the worthy cause. The Association appreciates deeply this generous gift.

Other contributions have been received. This does not include all that have been offered. For obvious reasons we are not taking duplicates or War relics beyond the nineteenth century. A notable gift has come to us from Mr. Arthur D. Bryant, a native of South Deerfield and a long-time resident of Washington, D. C. This gift consists of the donor's "John Brown Collection," containing many photographs, printed clippings, manuscripts and books. Besides this Collection there are twenty-three valuable historical works, among which are four volumes of George Washington's "Diaries."

We have received an admirable printed cotton bed quilt. This was a wedding present to Elzina Salome Williams when she married, in 1847, Horace Denio, a direct descendant of Jaques deNoyon, who married Abigail Stebbins of Deerfield.

The wire has been removed from the Pewter case in the Kitchen and glass doors substituted. This will preserve the heirlooms free from dust.

In early May Dr. Warren K. Moorehead, a leading American archaeologist, spent some time in our Indian Room. He said our "important collection of Indian relics was worth studying, and was valuable as illustrating the Indian life of this region." Later he sent his assistant, Mr. Melvin Barnes, to make outline drawings of specimens, and to assist Mr. Willett V. Forbes of Greenfield in photographing adzes, gouges, celts and axes. These illustrations will appear in a forthcoming work of Dr. Moorehead on "Cutting Tools of the American Indian."

The curator has spent much time on the stony remains in our Collection of the Aborigines of New England who ante-dated the Algonkians. The work of Dr. Moorehead on "The Archaeology of Maine", 1922, and of Dr. Charles C. Willoughby on "Antiquities of the New England Indians," in 1935, have thrown strong light on the subject. It is hoped that other adze blades (the name Dr. Willoughby gives to adzes, gouges and celts) will be found in the Pocumtuck Valley, and contributed to our Association.

Occasionally letters are received expressing appreciation of the "Proceedings" published by this Association. One such letter will be read by the Corresponding Secretary.

The Assistant, Miss Mellen, has continued her watchful care of the Hall and grounds. She has recorded in the Written Catalogue and in type-written cards the additions to the library, and has striven to do her part in helping visitors in their historical and genealogical researches.

Respectfully submitted,  
J. M. ARMS SHELDON.





## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JENNIE MARIA ARMS SHELDON

The life of every human being is a study and a revelation, however dull and meagre the written story of that life may be. It is both a study and a revelation because it illustrates, more or less clearly, the forces of heredity and environment which are constantly contending for mastery in every man and woman. Just how much one owes to heredity can never be known with absolute certainty, but there is a consciousness that the debt is large enough to fill one with profound gratitude.

William Arms from whom my father descended had the courage and initiative to give up England or Wales for America. He first appears in Hadley defending civilization under Captain William Turner in 1676. About 1698 he came to Deerfield and bought the east corner lot at the south end of the "Street". Here he built a house in which five generations—Daniel, Daniel, Aaron, Christopher Tyler, and George Albert, my father, were born.

The conditions of life existing in 1815, the year of my father's birth, and the traits of character developed by these conditions, have been described in my "Life of a New England Boy." It cannot be denied that the hard, rough experiences of those early New England days have a certain toughness of fibre, an individuality of character and a tenacity of purpose. All these were reflected in the training which my father gave his two daughters. They were, first of all, to be physically strong; they were to be educated, and then, in his own words, "they were to shirk for themselves." In other words, they were to be fitted for some kind of work which would make them independent, self-supporting women. They were not to be cuddled and coddled and brought up for an easy life and an uncertain event; ah no, they were in the language of a great American President to be brought up "so that they could handle themselves in a hard time." This invaluable training is the best legacy a father can give his child, and every right-minded child comes in time to prize it at its true worth.

My father's tendencies in religious thought were toward liberalism. They may have been due, in part, to the influence of Dr. Samuel Willard, the first Unitarian minister in western Massachusetts, who was settled in Deerfield in 1807. Be this as it may, father's views broadened with the years till he became an Independent.





My mother, Eunice Stratton Moody, descended from the Moodys and Alexanders of Northfield, Massachusetts. She was a teacher in Cambridge and was greatly beloved by her pupils. April 7, 1843, she became the wife of George Albert Arms who was then a merchant in Northfield. In 1848 the father, mother and little daughter, Ellen Louisa, went to Columbus, Georgia. It was then that Eunice Moody Arms came face to face with the horrors of slavery. Her whole being revolted against the inhuman practices and henceforth she lost no opportunity to throw her influence by voice or pen on the side of abolition.

In 1852 the family was settled in Bellows Falls, Vermont, and on Thursday, the twenty-ninth of July of that year, the younger daughter, Jennie Maria, was born. There are logical and scientific reasons for maintaining that prenatal conditions play a large part in the making of a child. My mother, as I have said, was intensely absorbed in the great questions of her time,—slavery or freedom for the colored people of the South, union or disunion for her beloved country. I have always been deeply interested in national affairs; have never from childhood had the slightest feeling of caste, and have firmly believed in the education and development of the Negro race. Besides this inheritance, I received from my mother her physical features, and many of her tastes, one of which was a perfectly natural love of expressing her thoughts in writing. This I did as a child, and through all my life it has been a delightful and stimulating avocation.

The first great sorrow came in 1857 when the mother who knew and understood her children was taken from them and they were left — two lonely little girls. But life was made very sweet for them in the beautiful home in Old Deerfield, under the loving care of a wise aunt, Avise Stebbins Arms, who was a woman of rare intelligence and common sense. Indeed, life was so happy that Deerfield was ever a magnet drawing them to itself.

In 1859 the father married Frances Ward Stearns of Dummerston, Vermont. Already he had established himself in the hardware business in Greenfield, in which town he spent the remainder of his life.

I attended the public schools in Greenfield from primary to high graduating in 1869. Owing to an inflammation of the eyes which had been an handicap since I was three years old, my school work was interrupted, and I often had to depend upon others for help. With infinite patience my second mother wrote out my many "compositions", and my teachers aided me in every possible way.





After graduation a year was spent at the Prospect Hill School for young ladies in Greenfield, and then it was generally supposed my education was "finished". Never for an hour, however, did hope forsake me. My eyes and defective vision were certainly obstacles, but "obstacles were things to be overcome." If I could not go to college, my intensest desire, I could go somewhere and learn more than I then knew. So like a soldier ready for the battle which he watches from afar, and eager to spring when the right moment comes, I waited. Three years I waited. As my eyes permitted I read Emerson and Carlyle. Darwin's "Descent of Man" inspired me, and though I could not understand half of it, it seemed to offer the only rational explanation of the development of life upon our earth.

My love for writing and my interest in public affairs led naturally to an expression of my views on various questions of the day. My first article appeared in the *Woman's Journal* of April 6, 1871, and the letter of acceptance from Lucy Stone made me fairly tread on air. In the spring of 1872 I was in Boston. The question of Woman Suffrage was before the Legislature. Up to this time I had been a zealous believer in the higher education of women, my graduating thesis bearing the title, "What shall be the foundation of the structure?" — the structure being woman suffrage, the foundation, education. But I was far more enthusiastic on the subject of education than equal suffrage. At the end of the week I was an out-and-out suffragist which I have remained to this day.

Unconsciously forces were operating to bring me nearer my goal. During the waiting years I came to know my own cousin, Mary Lowell Stone, whose home was in East Cambridge. Our mothers had been teachers there, and more than this they had been devoted sisters. By the early death of both mothers the currents of our lives had borne us apart; now, by some good fortune, they brought us together. I had not spent an half hour with Mary Lowell before I felt absolutely at home. I knew I loved her. She divined my thoughts on most subjects before I could express them. Time passed; it seems that she had made up her mind to get me, in some way, down to Boston.

Another more distant cousin, Miss C. Alice Baker, a leading Boston teacher and historical writer, was vitally interested in the education of girls. She had heard of my unsatisfied longings, had conferred with Mary Lowell, and one day she asked me to meet her at the "little parlor" of the Old Deerfield Post Office on July 29, 1873. That day I never forgot! It lives apart from the other days of my life as something sacred and glowing.





Miss Baker was a woman of strong personality. She had keen insight into the motives of human nature, and positive opinions as to what girls should be and should do. I stood in great awe and admiration of her ability. I do not know what I said or how I said it; I only know she found what she was searching for — that, in spite of all obstacles, I was dead in earnest. She immediately wrote to Mrs. Ada Shepard Badger of Boston who had a large school for young women at Number 34 Newbury Street. About this time my cousin, Mary Lowell, offered me a home with her. Miss Baker's letter was the kind which produces results. Conditions were made so favorable that I became a pupil in the Badger School the following autumn.

Happier than anything I can imagine I fairly reveled in the marvelous life of Boston. My school was an inspiration; my home delightful beyond words to tell. The sea air was bracing, my health improved and my eyes grew stronger.

Mary Lowell Stone was a rare combination of culture and character. Broadminded, large-souled, with a will power dominating her physical nature she was unique among women. Whatever she undertook you knew beyond the shadow of a doubt she would accomplish. Possessing sufficient means to live an easy life she, nevertheless, preferred to prove her ability to stand alone. Her father, Lowell Stone, at the time of his early death, was cashier of a Boston bank, and his daughter inherited his marked business talent. She became assistant treasurer and finally treasurer of the East Cambridge Savings Bank to the entire satisfaction, unanimously expressed, of the board of directors.

Mary Lowell loved the best music, the best acting, the best lectures, so that the very best Boston could offer was freely open to me. Could any one have been more blessed!

Somehow I loved Boston from the first, and so I longed to know her intimately. Old Boston was fascinating. I explored North Square, rich with associations of Paul Revere and other actors in the Revolution. Many an hour was spent in Copp's Hill burying ground, overlooking Bunker Hill where my great grandfather, Captain Joseph Stebbins, fought desperately for freedom. I descended to the vaults of Christ Church, and climbed the steeple similar to the original one where Paul Revere's lanterns shone out on that ever memorable April night. Of course I lingered long in Faneuil Hall, in the Old State House and the Old South Meetinghouse.

I attended many churches of different denominations, including the Swedenborgian, the Church of the Immaculate Conception, and the Jewish Synagogue where the service was wholly in Hebrew.





The Free Religious Association of America gave lectures on Sunday afternoons in the old Horticultural Hall on Tremont Street. For several years such men and women as Octavius B. Frothingham, John Weiss, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, Edna D. Cheney, Felix Adler, Samuel Johnson, Francis E. Abbott, Anna Garlin Spencer, Samuel Longfellow, William J. Potter and others drew large audiences. I scarcely ever failed to attend, and the great truths spoken by these spiritual thinkers were to me like meat to the hungry and mountain spring water to the thirsty.

At the end of the school year I was asked to come back to continue my studies and do a little teaching; this I did. Through these two years we had taken natural science — Geology, Botany and Zoology — of Miss Lucretia Crocker whom we not only admired but deeply loved. With specimens, models, maps, etc. she had aroused our minds and we were eagerly asking questions of Nature. In thus creating a desire for knowledge she proved herself to be the true teacher and educator.

At the end of the second school year I was asked again to return. There were difficulties in the way, and to overcome these, Miss Crocker visited me in Greenfield. It was the third week of September, 1875, a golden week in my life. I went back to Boston and the Badger school. That winter the Boston Society of Natural History, after much heated discussion and strong opposition, opened its doors to women. Miss Crocker wished me to join her with others and we became members of the Society.

In September, 1876, my father, mother, Mary Lowell and self spent a week at the great World's Fair in Philadelphia. This remarkable exhibition aroused my interest. In fact, this centennial year, like the three anniversary years preceding it, filled Americans with enthusiasm and created greater mental activity. As a result I wrote articles for the Boston Commonwealth, under the editorship of Charles W. Slack, the Christian Register, Springfield Republican, Boston Transcript and Woman's Journal.

The winter of 1876-'77 I spent with my cousin. At this time the Massachusetts Institute of Technology opened its Woman's Laboratory; Professor John M. Ordway and Mrs. Ellen H. Richards were in charge. I spent sufficient time in the laboratory to know I wanted more knowledge of the physical and natural sciences, so my cousin, ever on the alert, made the plan that I should begin a course the next September at the opening of the Institute year. I was to spend three whole days in the laboratory, and she would spend three afternoons there analyzing minerals.





About this time a great undertaking was planned by Professor Alpheus Hyatt and Miss Lucretia Crocker, then on the Boston School Board. The object of this undertaking was to bring teachers and Nature together. The Teachers' School of Science was organized, and in the fall of 1877 began its splendid work. Miss Crocker insisted upon my taking Professor Hyatt's course in Zoology. Up to this time my chief interest had been in the science of Geology — the history of the earth from the beginning and of the development of life on this planet. I was intensely interested in the ancestors of animals, but not in their living descendants, and I had said there was one study I should never teach — Zoology. However, I had always followed Miss Crocker's advice, and been glad I did, so now I became a member of the class in Zoology of the Teachers' School of Science. From the hour of the first lecture by Professor Hyatt to the present time I have been grateful to my counselor and guide for her wise advice. In the autumn of 1878 the lectures of the Teachers' School of Science were given in Huntington Hall, and five hundred teachers availed themselves of this rare opportunity. Before this course was finished in the spring of 1879, I was a special teacher of Zoology in two Boston schools, Miss Hilliard's and Miss C. Alice Baker's.

At this time I was asked to write a series of articles on "Natural History in Primary Schools" for "The Primary Teacher", a monthly magazine published in Boston. They were to be reports of the lectures given by the Teachers' School of Science. There were fifteen articles in all, and these, before publication, were read and criticized by both Professor Hyatt and Miss Crocker.

The two years I was at the Institute 1877-'78 and 1878-'79, much time was spent on chemistry, qualitative and quantitative analysis of minerals and metals, palaeontology, and biology. It was then I occasionally met the President, William B. Rogers, who was so deeply interested in the young students he is remembered with admiration and affection.

In the autumn of 1879 I became a special pupil of Professor Hyatt in the laboratory of the Boston Society of Natural History. There were two others beside myself, Miss Mary A. Wilcox and Miss L. J. Boardman.

I threw my whole being into the work. Professor Hyatt was not only an eminent scientist, but he was also a truly great man. He clearly saw the goal of all scientific study, "the increase of our stock of absolute knowledge and the betterment of humanity." The atmosphere of the laboratory was stimulating. Its Master Mind dared to follow his thought wherever it led him. With the enthusiasm of youth, and the training of maturity, he reveled in original research, finding his pro-





foundest satisfaction in discovering laws of nature. His pupils caught his inspiration and eagerly longed for knowledge at first hand.

Several numbers of a series of "Guides for Science-Teaching" had been published as an outgrowth of the Teachers' School of Science. Professor Hyatt asked me to assist him in the preparation of Guide No. VII on Worms and Crustacea. I made some of the drawings and wrote the descriptive text. When this was published he wished me to continue the series and the Guide on Insects was begun.

In the early spring of 1881 Mrs. Pauline Agassiz Shaw engaged me as a special teacher in the school she had established in Boston, partly for the education of her younger children. The school received a child at four or five years and carried him or her through primary, intermediate and high, finally fitting for college.

I was to have all the Zoology, Mineralogy and Geology, including simple lessons in Chemistry. Specimens, models, everything needed was freely provided by Mrs. Shaw, and the conditions for carrying out the scientific or natural method were extremely favorable. I taught in this school with keen delight. When Mrs. Shaw told me one May day she hoped the school would live many years, and she wanted me to consider myself engaged to teach so long as I wished to, I felt very proud and happy. The school continued thirteen years after I joined it, and I recall with gladness that I never missed a lesson on account of illness.

Working in the laboratory under Professor Hyatt, and teaching the subject in several schools was an ideal combination. It made me an independent woman financially in a field of work I loved. My life for many years was a heart-song of thanksgiving.

In 1882 a seaside laboratory was opened at Annisquam, the summer home of Professor Hyatt. It was under his direction, and a number of students and teachers availed themselves of its advantages. Here I came into close relations with sea animals in their own home, and much material was collected for future lessons. One day we spent dredging on Ipswich bay in Professor Hyatt's sailing vessel, the "Arethusa". It surely was a red letter day in all our lives! The water was calm and as blue as the sky above it. We brought up from the depths animals I had never seen, and from morning till night we felt we were on a voyage into the unknown. There is no keener intellectual joy than the thrill born of discovery.

In the summer of 1886 Mr. Charles F. King of Boston organized the "National School of Methods." It was held at Saratoga, New York, and teachers from all over the country





attended. I gave a course of lectures on animals and "the natural method." Every teacher in my class was provided with material for study so that hundreds of specimens had to be transported from Boston to Saratoga and back again. The school was carried on through the summers of 1887 and 1888 and I continued my courses of lectures.

In March, 1889, The Popular Science Monthly accepted my paper on "Natural Science in Elementary Schools", paying me handsomely for it, besides giving it an editorial notice. This greatly pleased my cousin, Mary Lowell, which was gratifying to me. All too soon, on June 3, of this same year she who had been my friend and inspiring companion for sixteen years was taken suddenly from me, and I was left to work on alone. Only those who have been helped in the crucial time of one's life and strengthened ever after, can fathom the depth of my sorrow. Not long after this I went into Boston and made a home for myself at the Mt. Vernon, on Mt. Vernon Street.

All the time I could get from teaching for nine years had been spent on the Insect Guide, and at last in 1890 it was published under the title "Guide for Science Teaching No. VIII. Insecta", by Alpheus Hyatt and J. M. Arms. The authors were assured by many teachers and educators that the book met a long felt want.

Up to this time I had been Professor Hyatt's assistant, but in October, 1890, the Boston Society of Natural History appointed me assistant in the Museum on half time. The Synoptic Room was assigned to my care for the purpose of completing the series on exhibition and ultimately writing a Guide. Professor Hyatt, as curator, expressed an earnest desire to have a Guide prepared which should bring out clearly the principles of a natural classification.

The Museum at this time was unique as an ocular demonstration of a natural classification of inorganic and organic nature. With tireless effort Professor Hyatt had striven to show man's relation to the earth, and the development of life upon our planet from the simplest form to the most complex. Living far in advance of his time he saw that the Museum of the future must meet the imperative demand for a genealogical classification of animals based upon blood relationship. Professor Geikie, the eminent geologist, after going through the Museum said that in its demonstration of a natural classification there was nothing in Europe to compare with it, and we know in America it stood alone. The rare collection in the Synoptic Room of fossil ancestors and their descendants, of glass models and beautiful drawings attracted me, and I began my long and difficult task with real enthusiasm. The Reports of the Society from 1891 to 1903 contain a yearly record of my work.





November 4, 1897, infinite joy came to me in the love and sympathetic companionship of George Sheldon, an historical writer, widely known through his "History of Deerfield." We had been acquainted years, had helped each other in literary work, and the sorrows of the last few years had brought us closer together. Though many years my senior, he was younger than I in spirit. In fact, he was so young I never once associated age with him; it was impossible because he was always mentally active and vitally interested in life and its many problems.

Mr. Sheldon's sense of justice to man and woman was remarkably strong and he granted his wife the same freedom he desired for himself. Twenty-five years before, as senator in the State Legislature, he predicted that the women of Massachusetts would vote in ten years, because "there is no argument against it." He was not only willing but glad to have his wife continue her scientific studies. "I want to go on with my work", he said, "why shouldn't you want to do the same." This absolute freedom, not only in daily occupations, but also in financial matters, and in religious and political opinions, intensified our love, and made our married life of well nigh twenty years a period of perfect happiness.

One of my wedding gifts gave me such keen satisfaction and so much inspiration for my work that any record of my life without some mention of it would be incomplete. This gift was a silver pen tray and pen from Professor Hyatt. The tray bore this inscription:

Alpheus Hyatt

to

Jennie Maria Arms Sheldon

pupil, assistant, co-worker and comrade

in Science from

1877 to

the final date was left to the future.

Every year until 1906 Mr. Sheldon and I spent seven or eight months in our comfortable Boston home, and the summer in beautiful Old Deerfield. This was a delightful combination of city and country life.

In 1900 my "Concretions from the Champlain Clays of the Connecticut Valley" was published. Sir William Dawson had done me the honor of bringing a portion of this paper before the Montreal Society of Natural History and publishing the same in *The Canadian Record of Science*, Vol. IV, Jan. 1891.





Since that time the illustrations had been prepared, chemical analyses made and much new matter added to the text. This book was largely a record of my original work, illustrated by drawings of specimens in my collection of about 1400 concretions. It is the most complete work published on the subject and is still (1935) in demand.

A blow like a lightning bolt felt upon the Boston Natural History Society, the night of January 15, 1902. Professor Hyatt in apparent health was instantly stricken down. The Museum assistants were dumb, moving about in silent sorrow. I had been associated with Professor Hyatt twenty-five years, first as pupil, then as assistant. An intellectual leader and inspirer had gone from us and my grief was profound.

The Guide to the invertebrates of the Synoptic Collection was nearing completion, and the Society wished me to finish the work.

In the summer of 1903 my husband and I spent considerable time geologizing. About two miles from our home a section of sand and clay deposits had been exposed which revealed unique features. Our observations were published in an illustrated paper, entitled "Newly exposed Geologic Features within the old '8000 Acre Grant'." The paper attracted the notice of geologists, and many interesting letters concerning it were received.

"The Guide to the Invertebrates of the Synoptic Collection in the Museum of the Boston Society of Natural History" was completed in 1904, and published by the Society in 1905. Thirteen years had passed since it was begun. A vast amount of time, labor and thought had been put into the collection and the text describing it. A keen sense of disappointment was felt because the one who had most desired to have the work done, the one who had been most interested and sympathetic when obstacles were difficult to overcome, and the one who would have rejoiced most heartily in the completion of the book was no longer with us to give it the final revision.

Sections of the Guide were bound and chained to the cases of invertebrates so that interested visitors could consult the book with the illustrations exhibited before them.

After Professor Hyatt's death a gradual but radical change came about in the policy of the Natural History Society, and the Museum was transformed fundamentally into a Museum illustrating the rock formation, flora and fauna of New England.

In the spring of 1906 Mr. Sheldon and I left Boston expecting to return in October. That summer, like the two preceding ones, was largely devoted to the work of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association. This Association was founded in 1870 by Mr. Sheldon and a few others interested in New England





history, and its large collection had been placed in Memorial Hall. Here we labored month after month, arranging material, and preparing a second edition of the catalogue of relics which now numbered among the thousands. Overwork brought on an attack of illness in October which so reduced Mr. Sheldon physically he was never again able to return to Boston. But his brain was busy even when he was confined to the bed. The following spring he partially recovered from the attack, and for years we worked together along historic lines.

In 1912, at Mr. Sheldon's request, I was elected curator of the Museum, a position which he had filled since 1870. That year we edited volume V of the "Proceedings" of the Association.

It was New Year's day 1913, that my only and dearly beloved sister died. She had always been deeply interested in my intellectual progress, and had given me that whole-hearted sympathy which incites to greater endeavor. Life is poorer without such helpers and the way is harder.

My keen interest in educational problems caused my election in 1913 as Trustee of the Deerfield Academy and Dickinson High School, and five years later I was re-elected to this position.

The supreme sorrow came to me on December 23, 1916, when my husband's life work on earth ended, and I was left to go on without his visible presence. Knowing what he wished to have accomplished I set myself to the task, and with the help of able assistants, in the autumn of 1918 the fire proof wing, which had been erected in 1915, was ready to open to the public, and a card catalogue of nearly 20,000 books and pamphlets had been completed. Work is a blessing which sustains, and never more so than in the crisis of life when the heart is well nigh breaking. Comfort was found in the dedication of one of Mr. Sheldon's books because it is comforting when one's own are satisfied:—"To one who is my strong right hand, one in full sympathy with my aims, and an inspiration to execution; whose unceasing tenderness and devotion fills my years with passing peace this little work is lovingly dedicated."

In 1919 a third edition of the catalogue of relics, and a second edition of the Guide to Memorial Hall, were prepared; while writing was still my avocation as in the days of my youth.

In 1932 The National Research Council placed me among "American Investigators" and soon after I was nominated for membership in the Archaeological Institute of America.

In 1932-'33 I gave the Science Building to the Deerfield Academy as a memorial to my father.

In the summer of 1933 I was elected Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (A.A.A.S.).





HISTORY  
AND  
PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
POCUMTUCK VALLEY  
MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



VOL. IX.

DEERFIELD, MASS., U. S. A.

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IN PARTS

HISTORY

OF

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

PORTLAND VALLEY

MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



1907

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# ASSOCIATION

# REPORT

This is the first of several "annuals" which will together constitute Volume IX of the "History and Proceedings" of this association. It contains original matter and has been edited and published under a vote by the association at its annual meeting on February 28, 1939.

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It is believed that annual publication will be pleasing to those who are interested in the Old Deerfield region and its people and in the subjects discussed in the papers printed. The edition is limited. The several publications by this association are listed inside the back cover of this pamphlet.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;

W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer.*

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.





## SIXTY-NINTH ANNUAL MEETING—1939

*At Memorial Hall in Old Deerfield*, on "the last Tuesday in February," members and friends of the "P.V.M.A." occupied the curious old chairs and benches in the Council Room. President Thompson, seated at a gate-legged table in the corner at the left of the tall round coal stove, called the meeting to order at two o'clock and announced that, before proceeding to the business of the meeting, tributes to the memory of *five former members* of the association would be heard. These persons, excepting Dr. Pierce, had served on the council. Mrs. Lucy Cutler Kellogg of Greenfield spoke of him, and Judge Thompson of Albert L. Wing. Walter A. Dyer of Amherst had written of Reverend Clair F. Luther of that town, and that brief study was read by Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks. The papers on Mrs. Elizabeth H. Wells and Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen were read by Miss Harriet E. Childs and Mrs. Sheldon J. Howe.

*The president reported* on behalf of the executive committee; and said that, after presiding at these meetings for some years during Mrs. Sheldon's presidency, he still felt that he was acting "on behalf of" the Sheldons who had organized the Memorial Association in 1870 and carried it on until a year ago, and that so far as possible the policies of Mrs. Sheldon had been continued. The executive committee had appointed Miss Mellen as keeper of the Sheldon Collection and it has been well cared for. The hurricane of September 21 made necessary the cutting of some trees near Memorial Hall and the school-yard, and a diseased tree which was interfering with growth of a fine shade tree was also removed.

His report suggested that the proceedings at these annual meetings might be published each year in pamphlet form, so that the papers would be promptly available





(with possibly increased sales) and so that the labor and expense of publication would come annually instead of at intervals of some nine years. The president reported having prepared for printing the proceedings for the period 1930–1938, and gave an estimate of the probable cost of publication.

*Miss Mellen's report*, showing increased acquisitions and attendance, was read, and the treasurer made a favorable financial report. These were accepted by unanimous vote. The officers and trustees who had served during the past year were reelected, and Mrs. Kellogg and Mr. Coffin were elected to fill the vacancies in the council. Publication of Volume VIII of the "History and Proceedings" and of annual pamphlets was unanimously approved.

*John E. Gale, Esquire*, of Guilford, Vermont, president of the Windham County Historical Society, presented in an interesting way an informing account of the "Northern Neighbors of the Pocumtucks" and described artifacts left about an Indian village, uncovered by the flood of 1936, and collected by himself and his co-workers, one of whom joined in the informal discussion with which the afternoon meeting closed.

*The council met*, following the corporation meeting, and reappointed the auditors and committees listed on another page. It was informed that Miss Elsie A. Catlin, having a life use of Frary House under the will of C. Alice Baker, had written the president of her intention to soon relinquish that interest; and all matters concerning that property were left in the hands of the Curators of the Frary House Estate.

*In the town hall*, at six o'clock, the women of Deerfield, ever loyal supporters of the old P.V.M.A., furnished an excellent supper. This and the meetings were well attended, though a discouraging cold rain was falling and the roads were icy. At 7.15 the president asked Professor William G. Avirett to read an appreciation of Mrs. Frances N. S. Allen which had been written by





*Miss Whiting.* This was followed by the singing of three selections by the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy under the efficient direction of Mr. Oatley,—an annual contribution to the pleasure of the auditors which is highly appreciated. To the club and to the generous women of Deerfield the thanks of the association were extended.

The speaker of the evening was a vice-president of the organization, *Edward E. Whiting* of Newton; author, columnist and lecturer. He read a paper on "Living History," which he made the more vital and interesting by frequent and characteristic comments, often tying into the story parallel happenings during the history of Deerfield. Judge Thompson then read a short paper on *Pine Hill*, in Deerfield north meadow, written in fulfillment of a promise made by him to Mrs. Sheldon. In it he quoted from three poems by Rodolphus Campbell, the hermit poet of the hill.

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## REPORT BY KEEPER OF THE SHELDON COLLECTION

Notwithstanding a season of abundant rains, culminating in a hurricane in September, which stopped the flow of visitors who usually come to Memorial Hall in October, there was a larger attendance than last year, 4,644, and greater activity along all lines.

Visitors came from 44 states of the Union, and from 11 foreign countries, including New Zealand.

On the whole, it has been an encouraging year, with the promise of a better one next year (1939), when tourists who come to see the World's Fair at New York, turn their attention to near-by New England with its numerous attractions.

There have been contributed 46 books and pamphlets, 25 copies of old newspapers, and 68 miscellaneous articles.





For a number of years we have received but little china, and we have greatly desired gifts of china and glass in order that the Hackley Cupboard on the third floor of the Wing might be filled.

We are fortunate in having received two such donations: one from Mrs. Harrie Nims of Boston, consisting of 15 pieces of china and glass, several from the Orient in perfect condition, which once belonged to Justus Nims of Deerfield; the second, consisting of five pieces, was given by Mrs. H. W. Bell of Springfield.

Mrs. Nims' gift included a very old rocking-chair, the rockers worn thin in the middle, and a child's chair, each of which came down in the family of Justus Nims, great-great-grandson of Godfrey Nims.

Besides the china, Mrs. Bell's gift included embroideries, 17 pieces of lace mostly hand-work, many of them having once belonged to the great-grandmother of the donor, who desired to place them in some institution where they would be preserved and appreciated.

There was besides a sandalwood fan from India, a tiny green silk parasol with ivory tips and top, and a picture of the mansion, built in Newburyport in 1810, by that eccentric man, Lord Timothy Dexter.

Two handsome oil portraits of Noadiah L. Arms, 1794-1841, and his wife, Hannah W. Arms, were given by their granddaughter, Miss Jessie L. Van Vliet of New York City. The portraits may be seen on the third floor of the fire-proof wing.

The gray silk wedding dress of Mary Graves of Williamsburg, who married John Montague of Sunderland on Oct. 7, 1830, was given by her granddaughter, Miss Martha Montague Russell of Bronx, N. Y. This is the last wedding dress that we can accept, as the Domestic Productions Room is now full to overflowing.

The Kendrick table of the type of 1700 was presented by Mr. Milton J. Davenport of Colrain in memory of his mother, Lucie A. Stone Davenport, 1859-1900.

We have also received from the estate of J. M. Arms





Sheldon, a mass of material, 34 items in all, relating to the literary work of Mr. and Mrs. George Sheldon.

A valuable contribution from Mrs. Sheldon's estate is the rocking chair of Persis Hoyt, who was Mr. Sheldon's grandmother. It has the original elm bark seat.

Respectfully submitted,

N. THERESA MELLEN.

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## FRANCES NEWTON SYMMES ALLEN

BY MARGARET C. WHITING

When Frances Newton Symmes Allen died last spring in the week following Easter, we, who were her Deerfield neighbors, lost more than her gay morning greeting at the post office, or the cordial chat on the street, or the little doorstep call; for we were bereft of a friend who gave to all of us her attentive interest in our affairs, who listened with sympathy to our troubles, who rejoiced in our bits of good fortune and whose hospitable welcome we had but to seek, to find. In return she modestly refrained from telling about the larger world to which she had belonged, and of the part she had played therein. She bore her own griefs in quiet, she told little of her achievements and the recognition she had won. Yet hers was a life well spent, full of variety and change of scene and social connections, one which had taken her from a Kentucky plantation to Cincinnati, to Chicago, to Providence, and the Connecticut valley and finally, at the end, to Old Deerfield. Each of these diverse experiences had left its mark upon her responsive nature. They gave her the poise of manner that was a part of her charm.

It would be interesting to try to trace the mixed causes of all these experiences, and their effect upon her many-sided character, for both North and South had





made their contribution. Her father, who belonged to the Newton family of merchants and sea-faring folk of Rhode Island, came from old Newport, with its careful adherence to the New England conventions. He died so soon after Frances' birth he had no part in her upbringing, yet many strictly northern traits in her character betrayed her claim on that heritage, and she herself was conscious of being swayed by influences other than those which surrounded her youth, spent on a bluegrass plantation in the midst of her mother's large family clan. To that young mother, lovely, cultured and gracious, Frances must have owed her social talents, her agreeable air of cosmopolitan ease; and from her southern inheritance came the particular quality of her pride. Scrupulously kept unseen, pride yet was one of her dominating traits, held in leash, as it was, by her religious faith. It was from her southern mother and grandmother Smith that Frances Newton took that devout loyalty to the Catholic Church which distinguished her character. So liberal in her attitude towards other beliefs that more than half her closest friends were Protestants, yet her faith in her own church remained constant and unwavering.

When Frances was about eight years old her mother married Colonel Symmes, a man of her own class, and the child thereafter bore her stepfather's name added to her own, in accordance with his desire. At this time she was sent to the school of the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Clifton, and later to a private school where she was fitted for the first great venture of her education. It was an almost unheard-of ambition for a southern girl to even wish to enter a college, and only Frances' mother backed the project. When the permission to have a year at Smith was wrested from the family conclave, the situation was so little comprehended by anyone, that her anxious mother wrote a personal request to President Seelye to meet her 16-year-old daughter at the train when she should arrive in Northampton,—an incident





that has become a stock anecdote in the annals of Smith College.

Though the family fortune could give Frances Newton Symmes only this brief experience in solid training, it was the springboard from which she took her undeviating course. Her love of learning woke her talent for teaching and all her life the two were one in her esteem. With a thoroughness that distinguished her ability to learn everything within reach, the capacity for close research, and her unflagging industry in the pursuit of knowledge, she possessed also the gift of imparting what she knew to others, of training young minds, of influencing and inspiring the love of learning which was her own personal enthusiasm. Frances' success as a teacher was assured from the start. After a short season in a private school in Cincinnati, she became a member of the faculty of the exclusive Kenwood Institute for Girls in Chicago and from there proceeded, several years later, to the well-known Wheeler School in Providence where she was so successful she was to have become its headmistress, if, in 1908, she had not married James Adams Allen of Holyoke.

This important change marked the end of one career, but opened the way for the employment of a secondary talent that had always had its share in her intellectual development. The gift of writing prose and verse was used by her from childhood, and now, with leisure, Frances Allen turned to fiction as the next thing to do. She produced three successful novels which Houghton Mifflin published, within the following five years; the last, "The Invaders," a study of Polish immigrants, has had a lasting recognition and is still included in libraries as a valuable contribution to the subject. Then came the Great War, which put an end to so many delightful things, and Frances turned to editorial-writing and essays, published in various magazines and papers; finally she became a regular contributor to the Holyoke Daily Transcript of graceful short comments on current





affairs and this work she continued to within a few days before her last illness.

The long decline in health of her husband darkened the later years of her happy marriage, and when he dropped dead in the street in 1923, this final shock reduced Frances' nervous strength seriously. A complete change being imperative she left the city for the country she had always loved, and removed to our village, which had long known her as a frequent visitor, and was now chosen to be her last abiding place. Here, in the house she acquired some three years after, she lived the life we knew. Adapting herself, as she always did, to her surroundings, she found plenty to do in small ways that gave pleasure to her neighbors, and in spite of impaired health and vanished happiness for herself, she employed once again her teacher's gift for the benefit of the young Academy boys whom she welcomed each year to her best hospitality and friendly care. She joined the P. V. M. A. as soon as she came to Deerfield, and to its annual programs she contributed three valued papers and notes for another were found in her effects, showing the exhaustive reading which was her scrupulous method of preparation in such work.

We said: "She went too soon," but perhaps it was a going exactly to her mind. Without undue trouble for her friends, with only three days of suffering, uncomplaining and submissive to the care bestowed, a brilliant, useful and gallant life of 73 years full of work well done, that had gathered hosts of loyal friends and admirers, ceased, when Frances Newton Symmes Allen died on April 23rd, 1938.





## FRANCES NEWTON SYMMES ALLEN

BY MRS. MINNIE R. DWIGHT

It is highly right that this honored organization, the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, should pause in its discussions of history to pay tribute to Mrs. Frances Newton Symmes Allen, for it was here in Old Deerfield that this gifted woman found a way of life which was the sum of her ideals.

I am privileged to be permitted to speak of her overflowing personality before this group of men and women who seek deliberately to link themselves with the storied past of this valley. In a letter written to me just a year ago, Mrs. Allen rejoiced that she had been called from a happy membership in this body to a place higher in its councils, and she told me of the paper she was preparing to read at its annual meeting.

It will be noted that I have used her name in full. Once I questioned the use of so many names for the title page of her first novel, fearing that it would not catch the public attention. She said that her life had been many-chaptered; that the several divisions of her full name represented as many lives. That explains much: Mrs. Allen was one of those many-sided people who defy an adequate or complete summing up. She was able in a most unusual way to express and live those many sides.

Born, in the time when the Civil War was just closing, in the city of St. Louis and of an old southern family; and cradled in the generous easy-living of her family's tradition; she came—after a long lifetime of continuous journeying into far fields of mind and soul—to haven here, in this very stronghold of old New England. The human struggles that had taken place on this noble street of Old Deerfield were a far cry from her inheritance through Kentucky forebears, but they became





a part of her life: she chose to derive from them and to become a part of them.

Few people have the gift to open so many doors, to lift a voice in such varied tones, as blessed Mrs. Allen. She commanded so many ways of self-expression! Beauty was her dower, and grace: charm and hospitality were hers also. She wanted to teach, to travel, to write: to live. Smith College, then in its beginning, brought her to our own part of New England. Though she travelled much, and experienced much, it was devotion to a typically New England man which drew her back here. She made of marriage a sacramental experience in life. In marriage she found, with a completely different general personality, close kinship in the search for secrets of the wild flowers on the hills, the birds and the trees, and in the delight of life in the woods and by the streams, in star-shine, dawn and dusk. Much experience in many parts of the world had given to her the capacity for such joyous companionship. In extending hospitality the two were as one.

Even to the close of her days the seeds of her teaching years were blooming in her life through a long line of women who had drawn from her the grace to live well. There had been years, with less compelling interests than teaching and travelling, when Mrs. Allen had found the time to write much. Her novels, "Plain Path," "The Invaders" and "Her Wings," should be on the shelves of all New England libraries. They are rarely choice pictures of the period of which she was writing.

Over the course of many years Mrs. Allen's editorial writings, for the Holyoke Transcript-Telegram and other papers, covered a wide range of cultural and current themes; but she soared the highest when roused, by deeply grounded moral indignation, against the current letting-down of high principles in our every-day life; and the poet in her broke into song for the seasons of the year that draw us together—holy days and holidays.

In Frances Allen was a most rare meeting of the aus-





tere—a devotion to the simple things which could make them very great—and the regal by which she reached to the high places and the high things of life. All along the way she had been reaching out for the place where the streams of life met as they did in her own soul. Under the great elms of Deerfield she found her soul's search attained. Here she could have a complete and final flowering of her spirit: Here the maternal, which was so much of her being, could come to perfect fruition among shining youth from all places: Here her teaching gifts could have their way: Here she could think and write: Here she could meet men and women with whom she could have communion in cultural effort and adventure.

The very history of this wonderful old street, filled now to the full with the youngest in American life, was her joy. And in her "little house, her own house," she could break bread—of body, mind and spirit—with those who, like her, felt the touch of the wing of living history.

May I close this expression of my own understanding of my friend, Frances Newton Symmes Allen, with a paragraph written of her when she went from us?

"Her brilliance made her companion of the wind and waters, sunlight and stars; her mind soared in the high places; her courage met every challenge. She had the grace of mysticism; prayer was with her ecstasy; religion overflowed into every aspect of her life. Closely, within her own spirit, she walked with God in quiet ways."

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## REVEREND CLAIR FRANKLIN LUTHER

BY WALTER A. DYER

A youthfulness that belied his years, a never-failing boyish enthusiasm and zest, bodily vigor, and persistent optimism—these are the attributes that come most readily to mind in thinking of Clair Luther. Add to these a





scholarly mind, a remarkably retentive and accurate memory, and tireless energy in intellectual pursuits, and you have enumerated a few of the more outstanding characteristics of a man who, when he died last September, left a place that it will be impossible to fill, a place which he had made peculiarly his own in the life of the Connecticut Valley.

Clair Franklin Luther ("Martin" to his intimates) was born in Burton, Ohio, on October 3, 1866, the son of Ezra and Mary (Woods) Luther. Graduating from the high school in Painesville, Ohio, he attended Adelbert College, Western Reserve University, for two years and then transferred to Amherst College. After his graduation in 1889 he studied for three years at the Yale Divinity School.

He was ordained in Redding, Conn., on October 4, 1892, and preached in the Congregational Church there until 1898. He also served, in 1893-95, as principal of Hill Academy in Redding. Pastorates followed in Mystic, Conn., 1898-1905; Little Compton, R. I., 1905-07; Providence, R. I., 1907-08; New Haven, Conn., 1909-19; and Oxford, Mass., 1919-21.

In 1921 he moved to Amherst to become pastor of the Second Congregational Church, retiring in October, 1937, on the forty-fifth anniversary of his ordination. His Amherst pastorate of sixteen years was the longest in the history of the church. Leaving the parsonage, he and Mrs. Luther moved into the Strong House, the oldest house in Amherst and the home of the Amherst Historical Society, there to act as curator and to engage in those historical researches that so greatly interested him.

On June 14, 1894, he married Edith May Bouton of New Haven, who survives him and who continues to live in the beautiful and historic old house as curator. He also leaves two daughters, Mrs. Arthur H. Adams of New Haven and Mrs. William Nickerson of Baltimore, and two grandsons.





Mr. Luther was a born historian and his well educated mind was stored with historical lore, much of it of local importance. I have before me the Manual of the Second Congregational Church of Amherst, published in 1924, which contains a vastly interesting sketch of the history of the church and in which is preserved much valuable information that might otherwise be forgotten. That is the sort of thing he loved to do. He also wrote and directed an historical pageant on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the church, in 1932.

He loved nothing better than to delve into the obscure sources of local history. He was an accomplished antiquarian. He took great pride in the fact that he was the greatest living authority on the so-called Hadley chest. His book on that subject is as authoritative as it is beautiful; it represents years of patient research. He wrote also for magazines dealing with American history, genealogy, and antiques. He was a collector of old coins, old tools, and postage stamps.

He had been for four years president of the Amherst Historical Society and was a past president of the Amherst Ministers Association. In 1928 he became a member of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and in 1934 was elected a member of its Council. He was a regular attendant at the annual meetings of the Association and contributed to their interest by taking part in the informal discussions and reminiscences. In 1933 he contributed a paper on "John Hawks as a Hadley Chest Maker," in which he traced the connection of John Hawks of Deerfield with a number of the Hadley chests. He was also president of the Luther Family Association and was at work on a nearly completed genealogy of the family at the time of his death.

He was a remarkably skilled craftsman, inheriting a special talent from his forbears. He enjoyed nothing more than working with his hands in his well equipped workshop. He possessed a knowledge of cabinet woods and was a great lover of trees. He was a good gardener.





As president and custodian of the Amherst Historical Society he spent many happy hours classifying and rearranging its collections, and to work on the improvement of the house and grounds was a labor of love with him. These and many other interests and hobbies helped to keep him young.

He was always much interested in the affairs of Amherst College, his Alma Mater. For a number of years he had been secretary of his class, '89. He was also class agent for the Alumni Fund and a member of the Board of Inspectors for the Election of Trustees. He had served as historian for the Amherst chapter of his fraternity, Beta Theta Pi.

Though the diversity of his interests and activities doubtless had much to do with the preservation of his youthful spirit, that contagious enthusiasm which his friends knew so well was doubtless born in him as a part of his character and temperament. What obvious delight he took in a fresh clue to a hitherto unknown Hadley chest, or in the discovery of some bit of obscure historical or biographical lore! He was bursting with projects for the future and looked forward to years of activity in building up the Amherst Historical Society and its collections. In many ways his last year was the happiest of his life.

The news of his sudden death from an unsuspected heart ailment on September 11, 1938, came as a distinct shock to those of us who knew him well, since he had been apparently in such robust health, so energetic and optimistic, so young for his years. It seemed as if he were assured of years ahead for carrying on the useful activities which absorbed him. He was laid to rest in beautiful Wildwood Cemetery, Amherst. It is with genuine sorrow, and yet with a sort of joy in the memory of him, that I pay this inadequate tribute to my friend.





**WILLARD HENRY PIERCE**

Born November 21, 1863, at Westminster West, Vt.

Married September 5, 1888, at Bernardston, Nellie M. Gray

Died September 24, 1938.

BY MRS. LUCY CUTLER KELLOGG

From John Pers of Old and New England did Dr. Pierce trace his descent, and from the Vermont branch of this family, represented by his grandparents, and his parents Nathan G., and Roxanna (Keach) Pierce, he inherited an independence of spirit, an intense love of country, devotion to duty and unswerving loyalty to his native state.

His paternal home at Westminster is now known as the Kurn Hattin Home for Boys, a fact in which he took pride, and that it is serving in the development of youth was to him a source of great satisfaction.

His earlier education was that of the village school, followed by advanced study at Saxtons River Academy. Having chosen the practice of medicine as his life work, he entered the Medical School at the University of Vermont, at Burlington, graduating therefrom in June, 1885. Of fine appearance and possessed of an unusually magnetic personality, he immediately attracted friends.

In September following his graduation, he came to Bernardston, assisting Dr. O. A. Wheeler, a former Vermont man; and when the latter soon after left for a California home, in search of health, Dr. Pierce took over Dr. Wheeler's practice. This he rapidly built up in Bernardston and the neighboring towns. Especially skillful in surgery he soon became recognized as a leader in this section in that line of work. His increasing practice out of town led to the establishment of an office in Greenfield, and a few months later, about 1892, to his





taking up his residence there, his home and office being in the present Best place on east Main Street.

Need for hospitalization for the many operations he was called upon to perform, led to his opening a private hospital in the so-called Major Keith place on west Main Street. The immediate success of this demonstrated to the other medical men of the locality the feasibility of the undertaking and encouraged them to campaign vigorously for the establishment of a public hospital, something which had been much discussed but about which nothing of a constructive nature had been done. When the Franklin County Public Hospital was finally opened, Dr. Pierce, with characteristic generosity, closed his own and donated his furnishings and equipment to the new institution, thereby giving material aid to the foundation of the hospital which was due in so large a measure to his initiative.

Upon the opening of the Farren Hospital at Montague City he was honored by appointment as head of the medical staff, which position he held many years, and was always thereafter actively associated with that hospital.

After some years, returning to Bernardston to make his home, though still retaining his Greenfield office, his attractive, modernized residence there became one of the social centers of the town.

Not a seeker of public office, and having no time had he been so inclined, he did serve as town auditor.

Interested in the Unitarian church, he was a regular attendant, a generous contributor to its maintenance, and an efficient member of the board of trustees.

Always fond of the best literature and a great reader, he found ample opportunity for service on the Board of Trustees of Cushman Library and was long chairman of the board. Both his wife and daughter Roxy having served as librarians, after the death of the latter in 1918, Dr. and Mrs. Pierce took an especial interest and pride in fitting up a "Children's Corner" in the library as a





memorial to her. He was a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, the Franklin County District Medical Society and the Connecticut Valley Medical Association, and had held the office of Medical Examiner.

A thirty-second degree Mason, he was affiliated with the Masonic bodies in Greenfield and Springfield.

Dr. Pierce especially prized his membership in the Mount Mansfield Trout Club, at Stowe, Vermont, close to the majestic peak of Mount Mansfield. There he was wont to spend his annual vacations, and in association with many illustrious sons of Vermont, he always found congenial company, in one of the most beautiful sections of New England.

In Bernardston he took a deep interest in the meetings of the Senior Club, of which he was a member, enjoying the sociability always in evidence at the gatherings.

From middle life on, his appreciation of the best in the life of the older generations found expression in his acquisition of many valuable antiques; and when he relinquished his practice his offices were completely furnished with them, lending an air of quiet dignity, rest and richness, difficult to attain with modern pieces. One felt that the spirit of the past, mingling with the hurry of present day living, exerted a needed balance. Perhaps this love of antiques may have been in part the outgrowth of his studies of ancient lore.

His first appearance before this Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association was at the Field Day meeting held in Bernardston in 1891, where he spoke for the Bernardston physicians, past and present, as you will find chronicled in the third volume of the Proceedings. In 1928, when he had begun to relinquish somewhat his arduous duties, so that a little time was available, he again spoke informally at the afternoon session of the annual meeting; this time in a reminiscent vein, regretting the passing of the old family doctor, who he felt had gone the way of the street railway and the horse, and he





almost questioned whether so much specialization was contributing to the real best interest of the community. The next year, 1929, he became a member of this association, and so long as health permitted attended the annual meetings, the type of which, with the added social element, was so appealing to him.

On September 5,—nineteen days before his passing,—he and his wife quietly observed their fiftieth wedding anniversary in his sick room at the hospital, where the attendants and many outside friends joined in doing all that could be done, under the circumstances, to make the day memorable, and the occasion brought much joy into those last hard days remaining.

In the experiences of his full life of seventy-five years, even when death claimed his three dear children, his will and faith always won; and those of us remaining, who knew him well, have the example of an indomitable spirit, determined to “carry on.”

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A TRIBUTE TO  
MRS. ELIZABETH H. WELLS  
1845–1938

BY HER SON, JOEL BENJAMIN WELLS

My mother, Elizabeth Hawks Wells, was born December 9th, 1845, in Shelburne, Massachusetts. The house in which she was born was the tavern, post office and community centre presided over by her grandfather, Walter Welles, who was a militia captain, the youngest son of the Revolutionary Colonel, David Welles. She remembered that genial grandfather very well and had some memories of the changing of the mail-stage horses and the stage-coach travel of those times. She also remembered circuses traveling under their own horse and elephant power, when the “Circus Parade” was the arri-





val and departure of the circus. The farm was, of course, one of the old "maintenance farms" where the cattle, hogs, sheep and poultry were the family meat supply, the cows acting as family dairy before they were served on the table, and the fields, orchards and gardens providing the family grains, fruits, vegetables and flax. The hides were tanned on an adjoining farm by Elihu Smead, her other grandfather, who learned his trade under Joseph Stebbins of Deerfield, and the family shoes, harness, etc. were made by itinerant craftsmen or at the Smead farm. So Mother was probably one of the very last survivors among those who had had first-hand experience in taking the food all the way from field, herd or flock to the table, in taking the wool from the sheep's back to the finished suit or blanket, and the flax from the living plant to the finished handkerchief, sheet, fine shirt or embroidered sampler.

She married George Merritt Wells in December, 1872, and came to Deerfield where she lived for sixty-five years and three months, until her death March 17, 1938. My father died in the summer of 1883, less than eleven years after their marriage, but a good deal had happened in that brief time. Five of us had arrived in the home, the old house had burned Easter Sunday morning, 1882, and both Father and Mother had had serious illnesses. As Father's tobacco growing had left him in debt, he had planned to rebuild and start in the dairy business. He died in the midst of carrying out this plan. So Mother was left with the problem of bringing up five small children without means, and we have often marvelled that she succeeded in giving us a really happy childhood under such difficult conditions.

Mother's younger sister, Mary Smead Welles, had come to live with us several years before Father died. She really devoted the rest of her life to us and became a sort of second mother. We all remember "Aunty" with deep affection and Mother often spoke of how much she missed her up to the very last. She died in 1894.





Often during those hard years, my mother turned for help and advice to her cousin, Joseph Wells Stevens, for so many years the honored head of the Greenfield National Bank. He was like a devoted brother to her all his life,—always the very first to appear in times of real trouble, and a true friend to the whole family. And from my father's sister, Mrs. Helen Wells Field of Conway, we ever received sympathy and affectionate help.

Of her many early friends I particularly wish to mention old Dr. Deane of Greenfield. White-bearded, big and hearty, always cordial and friendly, he brought us all into the world and saw us through all the childish diseases, and we had plenty, and devotedly tended Father through his last illness. I remember that he always stayed for a long talk with Mother after he had completed his professional call, but I didn't realize until years afterward what this time meant in the life of a busy doctor and what unmistakable evidence he thus gave that he too, appreciated Mother. Nor can the name of C. Alice Baker be omitted here, since their friendship was one of singular intimacy and mutual regard. Probably it was through her that my mother became so warmly interested in the P.V.M. Association, whose annual meetings she attended up to the last year of her life.

Through all the vicissitudes of her long and arduous life, meeting the stern needs of practical existence in the care and upbringing of her children and facing her problems with unbroken fortitude, my mother was true to the inheritance of the pioneer blood which was her birthright. Death itself had no power to conquer that courage, though three great bereavements were hers in the early loss of my father followed in 1895 by the passing of my youngest sister, Abbie Tyrrel, and in 1905 by that of my eldest sister, Sarah Smead. Deeply as she mourned her dead, she accepted each grief and every deprivation as a burden to be carried without complaint or undue demand on the sympathy of others. Like many of her generation, my mother lived above the trivial mat-





ters of the moment. She drew her active intellectual sustenance from the best books and the best thought of her time, and, never wholly uncritical of her time, she moved abreast of the most liberal forms of thought and read the latest books. Thus companioned by the life of the mind, my mother maintained her interest in the political and religious movements of the world outside her own affairs and did not flinch at changes so long as they consorted with her clear-cut sense of right and wrong. It was to this ultimate bar of righteousness she brought her final judgment.

Hospitality being a marked feature of my mother's nature, she formed many lasting and varied friendships; she loved to gather her neighbors about her table to enjoy the products of what was, with her, the art of cooking; to everyone, who came to her door, she gave a cordial and sympathetic welcome. So her long life, spent chiefly in Deerfield, counted for much to her community, helped make the village doings an influence for betterment in church and school, and offered a notable example of New England character at its best.

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## ALBERT L. WING

BY F. N. THOMPSON

Albert L. Wing of Greenfield was during the years following 1906 a councilor of this association. He was much interested in its proceedings and often spoke during the discussions closing the afternoon meetings. He was born on April fourteenth, 1861, in Ashfield, and at one time worked for George William Curtis, for whom he retained an unbounded admiration and respect. He was proud of his native town and recalled with delight the famous Ashfield dinners to which Mr. Curtis and Charles Eliot Norton brought other literary notables.

Coming to Greenfield, Mr. Wing was employed by





the late Frank Whitney as a carpenter and by the County of Franklin as a turnkey at the jail. Ambitious to better his position, and believing thoroughly in the power and responsibilities of the press, he secured a position as a reporter for the Springfield Republican and covered the whole county. Having an excellent "nose for news" he retained that employment as long as he cared to do so, and then gathered news for the Greenfield Recorder until he was incapacitated by failing health.

Mr. Wing was a student of history, including that of our own region, and a reader of biography. In middle life he married Mabel, daughter of Albert J. Smead, and she survives him. Albert L. Wing, newspaper-man, had a wide acquaintance; and, being of a kindly nature, had many friends. His death, which was preceded by a long illness, occurred soon after our annual meeting of a year ago.

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## NORTHERN NEIGHBORS OF THE POCUMTUCKS

BY JOHN E. GALE

It is now two hundred and seventy years since the whites had any knowledge of the Connecticut valley above Northfield.

In the summer of the year 1669 the colonial government of Massachusetts sent Captain Daniel Gookin, with a few companions, to explore the region to the northward of Squakheag, as Northfield was called by the Indians. Captain Gookin's party went to the northern limit of the land claimed by Nawelet, the chieftain of this tribe. This took them to the stream now called Broad Brook, a considerable mill stream which drains about thirty square miles of Guilford, and flows through Vernon to the Connecticut River about one fourth of a mile south of the Brattleboro town line. The Indian





name for this stream was Wanasquatok, meaning little river.

Captain Gookin's party found wide, fertile meadows on both sides of the river for a great part of the way, and reported favorably for settlement, as the lands were not only fairly smooth and fertile, but there were many valuable nut trees, the chestnut, oak, butternut and hickory comprising a great part of the forestry upon the nearby slopes.

In this vicinity the Indians did not have their dwellings far from the river, and very few of their implements or other relics have been found here excepting near their wigwam sites, tilled fields and fishing places.

The days of Indian occupation here seem so remote, and evidences of their primitive ways and means are so infrequently met with, that our recent generations have given them hardly a passing thought, but Nature herself has forcibly intervened and compelled our renewed interest.

The Connecticut River flood of 1936 so extensively and literally opened up the subject of Indian occupation of lands in and near Northfield, and not only the subject but also the lands themselves, that when arrow-maker's flakes, fragments of Indian pottery and other evidences were discovered in the ruined meadows in that part of Vernon known as the "bow of the river," certain interested residents of the vicinity began a systematic exploration of the wasted tract, and continued their activities until they had searched not only the river banks of Vernon, but also those to the northward for a distance of about twenty miles, incidentally seeking every available source of historical information pertaining to the days of Indian occupation of this region.

About one hundred rods below the great dam at Vernon the Connecticut turns to the eastward and swings farther around until it runs directly north for a short distance, enclosing a peninsula of about seventy-five acres in area. Directly east of the dam the neck of land





is narrowed to a width of only a few rods, or about fifty feet at the top, the banks on both sides being most precipitous. Upon this peninsula, which is practically level, we are told there once stood one of the greatest Indian forts in the Connecticut valley: it enclosed one acre of land about 150 feet above low-water mark. Boulders and tree trunks were placed ready to send crashing down on Mohawks or other enemies who might be trying to scale the steep banks, and there still remain unmistakable evidences of an earth embankment and shallow ditch across the northerly end of the peninsula, for protection against an attack on that side.

As no water supply was available at the immediate site of the fort, a covered path was arranged, and secreted in a small gulch which led southeasterly down toward the river to a cold spring, from which the water still flows, although probably very few people now living ever knew of its existence. The sandy, wooded banks of the gulley have slid in to some extent, and no traces of the old covered path can be found, but the water still flows and finds its way into the old river.

From the site of the fort the river can be seen to the northward as far as Broad Brook, the Squakheag limit, and to the south about the same distance, a mile and a half, to what is left of Pomeroy's Island, so named for one of the whites who was killed there. We are told that this fort was destroyed in 1663 by the Mohawks.

Leaving the fort site, formerly known as Cooper's Point, the river runs east and southeast, then north, its peculiar foldings being such that a straight line drawn from the power house in Vernon into New Hampshire crosses the river three times. Standing upon the neck of the peninsula, facing south, one sees the river wholly upon his right hand: glancing left the river is there, but running north.

He is upon the left bank of the river, and upon both sides of it at once, without moving. Turning east, away from the pastoral scenery of Vernon, one sees but little





save the flowing river, its steep banks a tangle of vines and driftwood, darkened by tall trees, and altogether as weird and strange a prospect as could be found outside the remote primeval forests.

When the river again turns south it soon encounters the Vermont banks at the former landing of the old Stebbins ferry, where may still be seen a part of the logged-up structure which once supported a crude store house.

As the thick ice, riding upon the crest of the great flood of March, 1936, pounded the sandy embankments which had for centuries been a bulwark to the wide "lower meadow" which is some 35 feet above the ancient river level, the dry sand was washed out from under the frozen turf, which fell in great shapeless masses to the bottom of the washout, where the continued action of the flood took out a trench about two thousand feet long and up to 200 feet in width, with varying depths up to 25 or 30 feet, and with two great branches of similar dimensions.

Near the south side of the meadow the water cut through the sandy bank and turned back into the river. This meadow and washout are upon the exact site of the camping place of King Philip, who came here late in February, 1676, and stayed through the month of March. With him came ten tribes of red men from southern New England, including the Narragansets, Naticks, Nashaways, Nonotucks, Agawams, Pocumtucks, Quaboags, Hassanamesetts and Squakheags.

Their total number has been estimated at around three thousand, and this is said to have been the greatest concourse of Indians ever assembled upon the American continent before the Revolution.

No chief but Philip had the generalship and ability to harmonize and unite so large a number of the savages. He was the son of Massasoit, who was the loyal friend of the whites for forty years,—the same Massasoit whose tribe, the Wampanoags, furnished the corn which pre-





served the lives of the Pilgrims during their first winter at Plymouth and gave them seed for planting the following spring, when Massasoit himself paid them a visit; and upon their invitation came again in the fall, after a bountiful harvest, to observe a day of thanksgiving, bringing sixty of his tribe with him for a visit of several days, during which time the red men brought in deer, turkeys and small game sufficient for the entire company.

Massasoit had two sons, Wamsutta and Pometacon, or Metacom, but he wished his sons to have English names, so they were called Alexander and Philip. The old chief never wavered in his friendship for the whites, but during the period of forty years which had elapsed at the time of his death, conditions had changed very greatly. Immigration had brought the whites into New England at the rate of one thousand a year for thirty years, and the chiefs of the small tribes had sold their lands until Philip, who had become chief of the Wampanoags, reluctantly decided that either the whites or the red men must go, so took upon himself the leadership of his people, and in 1675 started the campaign of terror known as King Philip's War, for the prosecution of which he arranged this meeting of the tribes at Vernon in the early spring of 1676. The place chosen was ideal for his purpose: it had been occupied by the red men for a time back of any traditions of theirs. Examination of the banks of the washouts shows that since King Philip's time some great flood has deposited about one foot of soil upon the highest level of the old camp side.

This is evidenced by relics, found there since the flood of 1936, which were found largely on one particular level nearly forty feet above the present level of the river. This camp site was near clean spring water, which has not failed to this day.

Both sides of the river were occupied by Philip's throng, but Philip himself was on the west side. His camp is so located by Mrs. Rowlandson in the narrative





of her captivity. She was the wife of Rev. Joseph Rowlandson of Lancaster, Mass., whose home was burned by the savages in February, 1676, when that town was destroyed and many people killed or taken into captivity, their route being by way of New Hampshire, crossing the river to Philip's camp in what is now Vernon. Mrs. Rowlandson's story says "When I was in the canoe I could not but be amazed at the numerous crew of Pagans that were upon the bank on the other side." Their land was at or very near the old Stebbins ferry location.

Among the most interesting evidences of Indian occupation now remaining here are the grain pits constructed by them for the storage of corn and other food products. Recalling a statement made many years ago by Elijah Belding, of South Vernon, to the effect that there were, on his land near the river, some grain pits which had remained in a fairly good state of preservation since the red men left here nearly 300 years ago, a special trip was made by our explorers, who fortunately succeeded in locating these pits, of which there were two, side by side, rectangular in form, about 8 by 10 feet long, 8 feet wide, two feet apart, and about three feet deep, but being filled with leaves and debris they were not disturbed. Side walls of rough stone had preserved the form and location, which was near the foot of a long, steep, wooded slope covered with trees and but a few rods from the narrow meadow adjoining the west bank of the river, at an elevation sufficient to protect them from floods. This spot is approximately fifty rods north of the Massachusetts line. It is known that there were several other grain pits near by, on the slopes of the present highway, and but a few rods distant.

The little village of South Vernon appears to be on the site of a small Indian village, near the mouth of a stream described in an Indian land deed as Coassuck, now locally known as Dunklee's or Belding's brook, and was the northern limit of the second tract of land sold by the Squakheags to the whites in 1671.





This tract comprised 10,560 acres and extended for six miles on both sides of the river. The remainder of their lands here, a tract twelve miles square, reaching from Coassuck to Wanasquatok was sold to the whites in 1678. It had been customary, when lands were sold to the whites by the Indians, to reserve their hunting privileges, but as this was not done when the Squakheag lands were sold, it was expected that the remainder of their decimated tribe were about to abandon their habitations here, which they soon did, and removed to the westward.

Among the relics recently found at the Vernon camp site are three stone tomahawks, of different patterns and material, and apparently the work of different tribes at widely separated periods of time. The crudity of the first, and the greater depth at which it was found, indicate pre-historic origin.

The second is well finished, and of material and pattern commonly met with about New England. The third is of a dark color, nearly black, and shaped like the usual pattern of the common chopping axe, the stone being flaked and not polished. It is thought that this may be Canadian, as the DeRouvilles with their 342 French and Indians passed this place in February, 1704, when on their way for the destruction of Deerfield, and possibly left a few souvenirs.

Other relics found here are about fifty arrow points of varied styles and materials, spear heads, fragments of Indian pottery showing many different patterns of ornamentation, stone hoes, scrapers, hammer stones, pestles, knives, and sundry other implements of unknown use. Indian bones, scattered by the swift waters, were found here in the washouts, and one whole skeleton at a bank further north.

By the use of small-meshed sieves about 75 small beads and one small cut jewel were found. The beads were of many colors and sizes, but all were small, none





being over one third inch in diameter. It is probable that they were made in Europe and traded to the Indians.

The little yellow jewel has now an enviable place in a pretty gold ring, and is much prized by its present owner. The sieves also brought out of the sand a little porcelain figure of a maiden, with a small dog curled at her feet, and lastly a little piece of hammered native copper shaped to represent that mythical creature, the thunder bird, a subject of veneration and of tradition passed down in all tribes of North American Indians for ages past.

This symbol is found carved in the rocks at the mouth of Wantastiquet, the West River, at Brattleboro, on the medicine tubes found at Swanton, Vt., on the totem poles of Alaska and the Pacific coast to Mexico. A carved "likeness" of this bird caps a two-story totem pole standing in the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, Mass.

One of the copper symbols was also found at Amoskeag Falls, at Manchester, N. H. The Indian regarded the thunder bird as a mascot, a protector, a beneficent presence, at all times to be relied upon as a powerful friend whose symbol was as sacred to the red man as the cross is to the Christian, and considered its possession most valuable for warding off sickness, accidents, enemies, droughts and misfortunes of all kinds. To lose one would be a calamity, and dire trouble might be expected to soon overtake the loser. We see what happened to the Squakheags after theirs was lost—or did Philip lose it?—a few short months before he lost his head. He was killed in August following his stay at Vernon.

But it appears that the thunder bird was something more than a mere tradition which held that there once existed here a great bird which produced lightning by opening and closing its eyes, and thunder by flapping its wings, and had the strength to carry off a man in its talons. We have recently learned that in the great as-





phalt pit at Los Angeles, Cal., among the bones of mammoths, saber-toothed tigers and many other prehistoric animals, there has been found a complete skeleton of a great bird which would have had a spread of fourteen feet. Scientists have given it the name *terra-tonis*, or super condor.

Within the past year further verification has been discovered in the sacred bundle of the Gros Venter tribe of Indians in North Dakota, containing two thunder bird skulls, which some wanton member of the tribe had most wrongfully sold into the possession of the Heye Foundation, the Museum of the American Indian, at New York; thereby causing such continued drought and other misfortunes to the Gros Venters that the tribe sent a delegation to Washington, to induce the officials to intercede for its return. This was finally accomplished, and the bundle delivered to the emissaries and returned to North Dakota, when such remarkable rainfall resulted that the lands were flooded to such an extent that the Indians suggested that they be allowed to return the sacred bundle and let the white men control the weather.

Apparently the mixture is not yet quite right to insure complete success.

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## LIVING HISTORY

BY EDWARD E. WHITING

We meet here today to mark the anniversary of a great tragedy; and, which is perhaps more important, to take heart from it, and from what lay behind and before it, to face such perils and such problems as time may have in store for mankind. For we sometimes fall into the easy error of thinking of history as a static thing; some closed chapter to which we can turn in fine sentiment and with due reverence, thus recalling dramatic days that are gone. And when we have done that we are prone to lay the chapter back in the dust whence we took





it for a day, until on some other occasion we are moved once again to disinter it for a moment's observation.

History is not static. It is an unending process. When the victims of the tragedy in those far distant years, whose anniversary we observe today, fell beneath the scourge that overwhelmed them, certainly they had no forevision that long later a group of people, safe and secure amid the protections of another civilization, would turn to their time and their sufferings as one turns to some completed chapter. Those men and women were living their lives, and they died their deaths, all in the plain process of events which they could not exactly foresee and the memories of which they could not foretell. They faced their problems as all ages and all times must face theirs. That they did so in courage and in suffering marks the drama of their memory; but it does not isolate them as actors in a concluded drama. Their tragedy was of long ago; but the significance of their lives and deaths is still vital. Theirs is a living history, as is all history.

Tonight I am going to take you far afield from Old Deerfield, to another part of New England, and I do so designedly, for it seems to me that the true drama of Deerfield is something far wider in scope and meaning than the confined details of this town alone. Year after year you have heard scholarly and thoughtful papers and addresses on the great history of this town; and that is a very fine thing, and it has accumulated a rich store of treasure for posterity to read and note. Tonight, however, I want to offer another picture of that terrible problem and peril that beset the early settlers in our New England, pioneers who were laying the foundations for the nation we know. This lovely land that we know, these beautiful hills and valleys, these flowing streams—all the loveliness that we call New England was won and settled only through trial and stress, with sufferings and tragedies more than enough. It would be a melancholy thing, and it would be a halting and a fu-





tile remembrance if that were all the story. What we must find running through all the adventures and sufferings and heroisms of those distant days is some continuing and constant strain of purposeful strength, something that was destined to mark this land as one of vigor and of the soul's salvation.

As we so approach our task tonight, may I pause a moment from my tale to make reference to the loss this society, all Deerfield and far more have suffered in the passing of our former President, Mrs. Sheldon. It is for us who are left to undertake as best we may to carry on her idea and her purposes, and seek to be worthy in so far as our abilities will permit of the responsibility that has come to us by the loss of her. To her history certainly was ever a living thing. Hers was a mind not only scholarly, hers was not only a discerning love for history and for the memories of great deeds, but it was also and ever the mind of a scientist, to whom there can be no beginnings and no end.

Thus, as I turn now from Deerfield to the part of the country which we shall for a time study—always with its parallel to this town's own history—it seems fitting to me to quote an epitaph which appears on the tombstone of one Thomas Prentiss, or Prentice (both spellings appear) who was a beloved pastor in a part of Kennebunkport, Maine, very many years ago. It is this:

He that is here inter'd needs no versifying,  
A virtuous life will keep the name from dying;  
He'll live though poets cease their scribbling rhyme,  
When that this stone shall mouldered be by time.

All that language can do, whether prose or poetry, is to record what has been, or point to things to come, or express as well as may be lofty sentiments and fine aspirations; but the deeds of men and women, their actions and their faith, these are the living things; and though you dig amid the dust of ages you will but find there the gropings of men's thoughts. And where those thoughts





are high and where they made by them an impress on their own days and nudged civilization a bit forward towards the dim goal of mankind's mysterious purpose on this earth, then doth the memory of them remain, even though their names may be forgotten and their tombstone be mouldered by time. History lives continually, and men and women are but actors who carry onward century by century the destiny of the human race. I could tell you more about Thomas Prentiss, but it has no place here. Sufficient, that he was a good and able man, and that when he passed from this earth there was a current in the progress of the life about him which had taken speed from him, and so, we may believe, is a part of the current of life even now. So it is with all men and women; and so it certainly is with our beloved leader, Mrs. Sheldon.

To understand what made New England, and America, you have to go to the small towns, the villages, rather than to the crowded centers of civilization. There is an intimacy and an individualism in the smaller places which become dulled and lost amid the masses of the cities. To trace the development of the New England spirit and character you must seek out the villages of early days, or of our great cities before they became such. The significances of history are to be found in the regions which were insignificant—which is less a paradox or a contradiction than it appears. Democracy, or what we loosely call so, is the supremacy of the ordinary as distinguished from the dominance of the few.

The little village which provides the material for my paper tonight is down on the coast of Maine: Cape Porpoise. It is now a part of Kennebunkport, but in the days with which I have to deal tonight there was no such place as Kennebunkport. Cape Porpoise was the original settlement—first inhabited in the spring of 1620, before the Pilgrims landed on Plymouth Rock. Those early Maine settlers were fishermen, who built their huts on what is still called Stage Island, fished through the





season, and left their huts in the fall to sail across the seas and again to return, until the time came, not many years later, when they took permanent root.

However, it is not the history of Cape Porpoise that I shall tell you tonight. That is another story. But it so happens that as I spent many weeks digging into that history, in preparation for a book the purpose of which will be to analyze the workings of the minds of our forefathers, seeking thus to trace some meaning of the characteristic behavior of New Englanders and other Americans in these later years, even until now—as I was digging into that early history I came upon many dramatic happenings involving the Indians and the white settlers; and while there is no incident in that history which parallels the story of Deerfield, I believe that some consideration of their problems there fits in with our continuing effort to comprehend all that concerned the tragic days of this old village.

My principal source of information in these matters was an old book published in 1837, the excellent work of one Charles Bradbury, and entitled: "History of Kennebunk Port (two words) from its first discovery by Bartholomew Gosnold, May 14, 1602, to A.D. 1837." This interesting work was prepared and published in accordance with a vote of the town of Kennebunk Port, the selectmen being authorized to subscribe to 500 copies "for distribution among the several families and draw on the treasury for payment." That authorization was of April 13, 1837; thus Mr. Bradbury's book became an official document; also it has become very scarce—a collector's piece. I know of less than half a dozen copies in existence.

Mr. Bradbury did a very thorough piece of work—so thorough that though you may search among original sources for the early history of that town you will find little that he did not find and place in his small volume.

Cape Porpoise knew the terrors and tragedies of Indian warfare; but I call your attention to the interesting





fact that those sufferings in that little village, even as those that came upon Old Deerfield, could not destroy nor stop the determination of our early New England forefathers to settle and use the land, and to lay the foundations for the nation we know.

Due to the Indian turmoil and destruction, an order of the General Court (Maine was then a part of Massachusetts) passed in 1714 stipulated that no town in Maine was to be allowed to be settled without a license from the Governor and the Council, excepting only York, Kittery, Berwick and Wells. Despite that, a number of the people of Cape Porpoise returned to what was left of their village soon after a treaty of peace was ratified and in quite a matter-of-fact way resumed their ordinary work of fishing, farming and milling. Says Williamson's "History of Maine":

"Though Cape Porpoise had never, before its destruction, compared with its neighbors in wealth and population, it had been inhabited by a bold and spirited people; and in 1716 they joined in a prayer to the Legislature for a restoration of town privileges."

Now here, I think, in those few lines by the ancient historian of Maine, lies something vital—one of the life germs that makes history a living thing: For even as those fishermen of Cape Porpoise were "a bold and spirited people" and even as the settlers in this valley were similarly bold and spirited, so down through the avenue of the years runs a boldness and a spirited courage that have made and marked New England among all the regions of the world. It is this boldness, this spirit, that has made us, and by it, and by it alone, shall we be sustained and continued in defense and possession of liberty.

Historians and such societies as this have done much to discover facts and incidents of our early days in New England, and yet there is much mystery about those days. For example, the first item in the story of Cape Porpoise relating to contact with the Indians—the first note of drama in a town that knew much drama—con-





cerns a man known only as "Jenkins from Dorchester." Who he was, remains a mystery, but he enters as the first recorded victim of Indian tragedy. He had come to live in Cape Porpoise (then spelled "Porpus") and one afternoon he went with an Indian deep into the woods, with a store of goods for trading. It is recorded that somewhere on the way he went to sleep in a wigwam of one of Passaconway's men, and that in the night he was killed by an Indian who lived near the Mohawk country, who stole his pack of goods. This Indian was caught and brought back by Passaconway's men; but that is all we know of the mysterious Jenkins of Dorchester and Cape Porpoise. Drama came early to the village.

Now I am to tell of what was probably the most dramatic of the Indian experiences of this little Maine village. It did not have so terrible an ending as the tale of Deerfield's massacre and destruction; but it deserves so much attention as I shall give it here, for once again we find in it that daring and determination and faith and resourcefulness that have been throughout these three centuries the dominant and vital characteristics of New England—the quality that would not let tragedy be the final word, would not retreat, but built onward for all time.

Cape Porpoise is on a bay-indented coast, guarded by reefs like much of that shore. An outer island is called to this day Stage Island, so named from the fact that the fishermen in early days set their fishing stages there, and dried their fish. On that island was the town's first settlement. On it was what is called a fort—a circular affair, not formidable, but affording some protection. At this fort, following the declaration of war between France and England on Dec. 7, 1689, a small garrison of soldiers was stationed under one Lieutenant Puddinton, or Purrington. I find the name spelled both ways in the old records.

Incidentally, it may be of interest to note that to meet the increased expenses of that crisis "Massachusetts is-





sued bills of credit, which was the origin of paper money" in this country—so says Bradbury. Inflation got an early start.

There is some confusion about the commandant at this fort. While he is referred to as Lieutenant Puddington it is more likely that he was one John Purinton, who was then a selectman and the town clerk.

It was a time of fear. The troops left—for what purpose is not clear. It is alleged that they deserted. At all events, the village was left without military protection, and the threat of Indian attack was constant. The townsfolk hastened into the little fort on Stage Island, for what protection it could give, taking with them such ammunition and such food supplies as they could manage to carry thither.

There they were soon besieged by the Indians. There was not sufficient shrubbery to conceal the Indians, and the townsfolk were reasonably secure behind the stone walls of the fort. They were surrounded on three sides by deep water, they being on a point of the island. They had found a refuge; and a trap as well. They could not escape from their fort, had opportunity offered. They had no boat, excepting a frail canoe, one end of which was stove in so that it leaked badly. Even at best it could hold but one person.

The Indians saw their plight, and they waited. Their plan apparently was either to await opportunity for a surprise attack or to starve the townsfolk out. They knew the desperate plight of their victims, and had but to wait.

Picture the condition of these besieged people! They were under constant annoyance from the arrows of the Indians. They saw no chance for escape. Nothing but death, and worse, seemed ahead. There was no chance of aid coming to their rescue. Death or captivity seemed certain.

But there was one rather curious man among them. He was a cripple, named Nicholas Morey. He had suf-





ferred a broken leg which had not mended properly. His name first appears in the town records in 1680. He was a carpenter; and it is probable that he kept a public house at Wells at one time,—where he was complained of in 1682 for selling rum without a license. He moved apparently to Cape Porpoise in 1686, where he also kept a public house for some years.

These particulars about Nicholas Morey, because among them all it was he who saved the day; a crippled, ill-sorted man, little fitted, one might say from what we know of his history, to be a leader or a hero. However, Morey made the suggestion that he should take the broken canoe, and start for Portsmouth for aid. It was a long way to go—for Cape Porpoise is nearly north to Portland. The sea was rough, and his craft was anything but seaworthy. He started out, slipping the canoe into the water noiselessly under cover of the darkness. By sitting up on one end he could keep the broken end out of water so that the craft would keep afloat.

So off went Nicholas Morey, on as remarkable a journey of relief as history is likely to show. Meantime, those confined on the island waited, with such hope as they could muster. Be it noted that there was no talk of surrender, of making any kind of a deal with their enemies. Their food ran out. They had nothing to eat that next day, with Morey on his fantastic journey on the seas. Their bullets they cut into pieces to make them last longer—they came to the last charge for their guns. The Indians, realizing the crisis, though knowing nothing of the Morey venture, intensified their attack. The besieged scanned the sea, throughout that appalling day, in the faint hope that aid might come. Their case was indeed desperate.

Late in the afternoon a watcher saw a speck far on the sea, in the direction of Portsmouth. It was a small sloop. The amazing Morey had either got through to Portsmouth or had met the sloop on the way—the records are





not clear on that point. The general belief is that he paddled all the way to Portsmouth.

The sloop sailed into the island harbor and sent a shot from a small swivel gun at the Indians. It was enough. The Indians fled from the island—which they could easily do from their end of the island, through shallow water at a low tide. The rescued townsfolk were taken off by the vessel.

And so for ten years Cape Porpoise was uninhabited except by such wandering Indians as may have come and camped there. There was no sound but the wash of the tide on the shore, or the rote that thunders over the reefs at mid-tide—the same sound that summer folks listen to in delight in these modern days. The gulls flew and dipped, the terns dove for small fish, and wild life took over all that was left of Cape Porpoise. So for ten years; but then the people came back—even as our forefathers came back here to Deerfield, and built again on the tragic wreckage of what had been.

In 1699 the folks of the town, or some of them, came back. It was their home. They found their houses fallen into ruin. They set to work, repaired the houses, fenced their fields, and put up small mills for their needs. Life was resumed. Soon, however, the Indians, presumably under French leadership, attacked in bands all the chief settlements in Maine, tearing down through the region from Canada.

On August 10, 1703, Cape Porpoise was attacked and destroyed. We spoke of going to the so-called unimportant places, to hear the heart-beat of early America. Well, there is a book titled "Indian Wars" by Penhallow; and of this bloody fate of Cape Porpoise all that Penhallow has to say is this:

"Cape Porpus, being inhabited only by a few unshielded fishermen, was wholly laid desolate."

A grim and abrupt epitaph; but complete.

Nicholas Morey of Stage Island was a humble man;





he did his task, and slips into oblivion. There is no monument to him, so far as we know. Yet it is such as he that have made New England. Let us follow for a few moments the movements of another humble man of that region—Stephen Harding, a blacksmith.

What about Stephen Harding—another unsung hero of those difficult days? His father was Isaac Harding, of whom we find record in the year 1682, when he was “convicted for very disorderly practice, and presumptuously taking upon him the office of a minister, to preach and baptise contrary to rule and His Majesty’s laws here established.” The court declared “against such unwarrantable and presumptuous practices as having no call from God or his people.”

The son Stephen, the blacksmith, was a good natured man, and of powerful physique, as a blacksmith should be. He treated the Indians kindly, and they appear for a time to have left him alone. He was a hunter, and often went in pursuit of game as far as the White Mountains. On a marsh near his home he was accustomed to keep a stack of hay which was so hollowed out as to provide an emergency place of hiding in case of trouble. Oh yes, Stephen Harding got along well with the Indians, but he was a cautious man—as cautious as seemed reasonable.

Harding lived on the west side of the Kennebunk river, and one day hearing firing from the direction of Wells, the next town, he thought it was only the soldiers stationed there. What he did not know was that during that firing 39 of the people of Wells were killed or taken prisoner. The next morning he planned to go hunting. His wife was apprehensive—she said she had seen faces at the window of their house, the night before. So Stephen, waiting for her to cook breakfast, went a little way, to his shop. On the way he saw on Oak’s rocks, at the end of Gooch’s beach—summer people now bathe at Gooch’s beach—a group of men, women and children coming towards his home. He could not understand this,





but he scented danger. He hurried back to the house and told his wife to take their child, aged about one year, and to cross Gooch's creek and to wait for him under a certain oak tree, till he could find out who these strangers were. He still hoped they might be friends, under soldiers' protection.

He crept into his blacksmith shop, and thumped on the wall with his axe, giving an Indian whoop. At once four Indians leaped from a hiding place and rushed towards the shop. They thought it had only the one door, which they could see; and they believed they had their prisoner secure. It was their purpose, presumably, to take him captive to Canada, because of his skill as a blacksmith. The other end of his shop was open, and through this opening he ran, and in a cornfield near his house he found his wife. She had fainted and could run no farther. The Indians were close behind, so Harding picked up his wife under one arm, his baby under the other, and with them he somehow managed to get across the creek at flood tide. There he left them under an oak while he went back to discover if he could what the Indians intended to do. On his way back to reconnoitre he came upon a gigantic bear; and he could not leave his wife exposed to this new danger. They started for Wells—a considerable distance, eating berries on the journey, for they had no food and no way to get any. They reached there, to learn of the killing and captivity of their friends of the few days before.

Now, what did those who knew them and saw much of them think of the Indians? When Bradbury wrote his remarkable book, just over one hundred years ago, there were still a thousand or so of them in that part of Maine. Memories of the terrors and tragedies of earlier days were yet fresh. Yet we find Bradbury, and we find Williamson in his Maine history, presenting a dispassionate and curiously philosophic analysis of their nature and their character. It is so remarkable that we think it distinctly worth quoting here.





"The Indians," says Bradbury, "are tall and straight, with broad faces, black eyes and hair, white teeth, and bright olive complexion. None of them are in any way deformed, or ever grow corpulent. They are extremely fond of ornaments and of bright and dazzling colors." He quotes Williamson as saying this—a singularly balanced presentation:

"Amongst themselves, every right and possession is safe. No locks, no bars, are necessary to guard them. In trade they are fair and honest; astonished at the crimes which white men commit to accumulate property. Their lips utter no falsehood to each other, and the injuries done to an individual they make common cause of resentment. Such is an Indian's hospitality that if an unarmed stranger comes among them and asks protection, he is sure to find it. If cold, he is warmed; if naked, clothed; if hungry, fed with the best the camp affords. They are faithful and ardent in friendship, and grateful for favors, which are never obliterated from their memories. Ordinarily possessing great patience and equanimity of mind, the men bear misfortunes with perfect composure, giving proof of cheerfulness amidst the most untoward incidents, with a glow of ardor for each other's welfare and the good of the country; all offer voluntary services to the public; all burn with the sacred flame of patriotism; and all most heartily celebrate the heroic deeds of their ancestors. The point of honor is everything, in their view. Sensibility in their hearts is a spark which instantly kindles.

"But," continues Williamson, "the darker shades of their character are many. An injury, a taunt, or even neglect, will arouse all the resentments of their untutored minds, and urge them on to acts of fatal revenge. Jealousy, revenge and cruelty are attributes of mind which truly belong to them. If they always remember a favor, they never forget an injury. To suspect the worst—to retaliate evil for evil—to torture a fallen captive—to keep no faith with an enemy—and never to forgive,





seem to be maxims the correctness of which, according to their ethics, admits of no question. To them, so sweet in thought and so glorious in fact is successful revenge, that they will go through danger and hardship to the end of life, for the sake of effecting their purpose. No arts, no plans, no means, are left unessayed to beat or kill the object of their hate."

So wrote Williamson, very many years ago when Indians were real and near, with all their virtues and all their faults. And to all this Bradbury, dating at 1837, adds this interesting comment:

"With these traits of character it would have been easy for the English settlers to have secured their friendship and assistance against the French. They, however, by their wanton insults and cruelty, and constant frauds in their dealings with the Indians, aroused their bad passions against them, and for more than a century were made to feel the effects of their imprudence and injustice. The French early gained the confidence by their kindness and fair dealings, and always found them faithful friends and allies."

As to Williamson's analysis and as to Bradbury's comment, we have nothing to say but to present them as voices from the past—and a past which was almost contemporary with the days of the Indian wars or the fresh memories thereof.

However, lest all this leave us with an excessive admiration for the Indian character and a possibly too severe judgment on the white settlers, let us turn to another brief chapter in those difficult days when the Indian seemed more notable for his darker traits; and to an odd incident of remarkable Christian forbearance.

This occurrence was in October of 1726. Phillip Durrill of Kennebunk went to his work, with a grown-up son, leaving in the house behind him his wife, a 12-year-old son and a married daughter with a 20-month-old infant. Mrs. Durrill had some time before, in 1703, been taken captive by the Indians, and believed that they





would not trouble her again, so little precaution was taken to guard against them. The married daughter's name was Baxter; and she was apprehensive and raised some objections when her father left them unguarded in the house—her husband having gone to the mouth of the Kennebunk river to load some vessels. The men assured her that there was nothing to fear; but she did not feel so.

Events proved that Mrs. Baxter's fears were well grounded. The Indians apparently had been waiting and watching some time for such a chance as this. They had feared to attack when Durrill was at home, for he was a powerful and courageous man. Thus, when the men had left the Indians rushed in, stole all they could carry away and tried, unsuccessfully, to burn the house, piling the chairs in and about the fireplace.

When Durrill returned at night he suspected that something was wrong when his small son did not run to meet him as usual. Discovering how things stood, he gave the alarm and then started with others in pursuit. As the Indians, seeing themselves pursued, fled, they found that Mrs. Durrill was lame and that Mrs. Baxter not being strong could not keep up. They murdered both women. The Baxter child they killed by the ghastly method of taking him by his feet and swinging his head against a tree. Young John Durrill was taken captive, to Canada; and a curious but not unique fact is that when he was returned to his home after two years he ever after appeared more like an Indian than like a white.

So that was the Durrill-Baxter tragedy. Peace between the Indians and the whites came, and in those days an Indian called Wahwa took cruel delight in gloating and boasting to Baxter of the terrible murder of Mrs. Baxter, and of his own share in that horror. One day Wahwa happened to be lying drunk—not an unusual state—by the side of an old well. Beside him stood the stricken Baxter, looking with fixed eyes at him, and thinking such thoughts as we may not know. To Baxter stepped an acquaintance, saw the strange look in his





eyes, and, pointing to the drunken Indian lying by the well's brim, said to him:

"Now is your chance—roll him into the well!"

Baxter turned his face and looked at his friend, shook his head slowly, and walked away, leaving his enemy to sleep off his drunk, unharmed.

Some light may be offered from this additional curious circumstance: When Mrs. Baxter fled she had with her their Bible. The Indians in their flight tossed it away; and in the following spring it was found in the woods, not much worse for the soaking it had had all winter. The leaves were taken out one by one and dried, and then were rebound. It may be even now in possession of some of the Baxter descendants though I can find no trace of it.

And so here, again, we have in a humble and forgotten man, some suggestion of qualities that made New England; and in that spark of grandeur that was in him is something that is an eternal part of history that lives on and on.

As you have followed with me these tracings of the past, in a land which like this beautiful valley knew the terrors and the difficulties of Indian days, we have come upon these items which are all parts of living history, and all marking the character of our New England and our America: Determination against all obstacles, courage of course, resourcefulness, sacrifice, and a Christian spirit under temptation. Let us take one or two more incidents that bring out typical and enduring Yankee traits—these are just brief shots into the past:

In October of 1727 two men from the local garrison—Huff's garrison—named Fitzhenry and Bartow, while on Vaughan's island (which is in Cape Porpoise harbor) for wood, were attacked by Indians, and wounded. Seeking to learn from these men how many were in the garrison, they tortured them; but they stood firm, and, lying in a good cause, told the Indians that the garrison was full, whereas there were actually but seven men





there. They were killed and tossed into a ditch, and "Fitzhenry's ditch" was so known for many a year, and even to this day is referred to. Summer visitors sometimes picnic there, but probably few of them have ever heard the grim tale of their picnic ground.

One day, around about that time, Mr. Huff's daughter was milking when an Indian ran up and caught hold of her. She swung on him with her milk pail, knocked him unconscious, and some of his companions lugged him away. Miss Huff finished her milking.

I have emphasized the importance of the unimportant, in reading and in making living history. Now once again I am turning to the immortal Bradbury, for what seems to me a most enticing bit of philosophy, in his interpretation of the Indians. Says he:

"The savages have but few wants, which are easily supplied; but in a state of civilization many artificial ones are acquired that can only be gratified by continued exertion. Man is naturally an indolent being, averse to labor, and consenting to exert himself only when driven by necessity to supply his absolute wants, or stimulated by his passions. As he advances in civilization his wants increase, and he is emulous to exceed his neighbors in the means of comforts and luxuries. Hence arises the necessity for constant exertion, in order to maintain his place, or to advance himself in society.

"To obtain the means of fancied enjoyment he will, through a long life, sacrifice his ease, forego the comforts within his reach; and brave dangers and hardships that would be insurmountable to the savage. In grasping at the shadow, he will resign the substance; and in endeavoring to better his condition he will lead a life of greater exposure and peril than is incident to the situation from which he is attempting to raise himself. Persons in competence or opulence acquire a taste for parade and show; and they are willing to leave a comfortable home and a loving and beloved circle of friends,





and in distant and foreign climes, brave poverty, dangers and even death itself, in the hope of obtaining the means of continuing or adding to their enjoyments.

"This desire of self-aggrandizement—this restlessness of disposition, which prevents so many from remaining contentedly in that happy state of mediocrity, alike free from the vexations of wealth and the miseries of poverty—this wish to accumulate property beyond the capacity of enjoyment, although in itself an undesirable state of individual feeling, yet, in the aggregate, has undoubtedly been the means of advancing not only wealth and knowledge but even of promoting happiness itself in the world at large."

Thoughts of a century ago! Do they not tell the story of New England—that restless, eager, unconquerable determination to go onward, to stop at no obstacle, to know no discouragement, to relinquish ease and security—to abandon the "happy state of mediocrity" and to build villages and towns and cities? So was Deerfield made, and so were great metropolises. The same living history of America is in them all.

A century ago my author, Bradbury, caught the truth in his philosophizing on the contrast between the way of the savage and the way of the white man. One more paragraph from him:

"From this class was our own happy and flourishing state colonized; and by them are our new states and settlements peopled; our ships, seeking wealth in every part of the globe, manned; the bowels of the earth and the dense forests ransacked, to obtain that rank in society that wealth always gives; and our country raised to its present elevated stand among the nations of the earth."

Thus a century ago. Thus today. Thus a century hence. It is our blessing and our boast that ours has from the beginning been a land of ideals and a land of courage. Errors we have committed; injustices, crimes, pain and poverty have had their pitiful share in the running





history of the years, but by and large there have, we believe, ever been principles ahead of policies and a continuing pursuit of the goal of a better civilization.

Those courageous men and women who peopled and guarded the frontiers, and sometimes left their blood upon them in the tragedies of war and sorrow—these men and women, whether in the Deerfield valley or on the coast of Maine, or elsewhere in the broad march of civilization, have had in their minds something more than selfish aggrandizement. They carried banners of civilization, banners of liberty and the rights of the individual.

So runs the backward look in our history—a history that cannot be regarded as a closed chapter, an old tale to be picked up and read and tossed away again, but a history that lives from century to century and from day to day. It is a far leap back to the days of the Indian wars—yet in essentials they are close to us, always.

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## PINE HILL—A PLACE APART

BY F. N. THOMPSON

Oh, mystical island of murmuring trees;  
The green fields about are your embracing seas,  
Save when those broad meadows, once home of the deer,  
Are flooded by tides of an oncoming year.  
Why murmur, or question what all perfect seems?  
The present is lovely: Of what are your dreams?

“Oh, mystical island”! How removed you seem, though so close to the village of Old Deerfield. Your murmuring silence is remote from the work-a-day world; as your wild, wooded plateau is lifted above the cultivated fields about. You seem further away in time than in space, for your associations are with the past.

We know that the red men drank at your springs; kept clear by burning “those broad meadows, once home of the deer,” and planted in the deep, dark soil their maize; doubtless fertilizing each hill, in the manner





which "Squanto" taught to the Plymouth Pilgrims, with fish taken from those running up the river to spawn.

Recorded time in our valley is very brief, and it was soon after the dawn of local history that the Mohawk "prince" Sahedra was basely slain by Pocumtuck Indians and the powerful Mohawk warriors came in their wrath and drenched with blood of the Pocumtucks the broad expanse of North Meadow.

It was here, within sight of Pine Hill, that our valley was thus cleared for an English plantation; it was on the other, larger, plateau near by that the settler built his home; and it was in one of their surrounding fields that Samuel Hinsdell turned the first furrow and made the place no longer red Pocumtuck but white Deerfield.

When the tide of civilization had temporarily receded and the Indian again planted here his maize, it was on Pine Hill that he made his camp. Mr. Sheldon wrote of the red men retiring with their plunder to this hill after an attack upon Deerfield September twelfth, 1675. When those brave settlers, in the spring of 1676, marched by, at dead of night, on their way to attack the great band of natives at the fishing falls near the mouth of Fall River, it was from Pine Hill that torches flashed forth to put in fear of discovery those 140 men who were hazarding, upon the success or failure of a surprise attack on the savages, their lives and their homes.

Pine Hill saw in 1704 the sad processional of the captives driven toward cold Canada; and that fatal Meadow Fight was within her view. Yes, she witnessed the preparation and the possession; and she saw the red and white tides ebb and flow, as she has seen blue waters flood the meadows and give place to green and growing fields.

All sunlit at morning you stand, freshly gowned;  
Majestic and distant; by Nature tree-crowned:  
You're always communing with her, or the Past:  
Pine Hill, it is Dreamland where your shadow's cast.  
Thou isolate island, of whispering trees  
Tho meadows about you be stirred by no breeze.





"All sunlit at morning" Pine Hill lifts above the steaming meadows as we look westward from the highway. Its isolation is notable. Mr. Sheldon says that the name "Pine Hill" was used as early as 1671, and that it is about forty feet high and covers thirty acres. The maps of the U.S. Geological Survey for Old Hampshire mark the high and narrow western plateau "lake bottom," and the lower and wider level table-land on the eastern part is marked "highest normal terrace of erosion" as is also the plateau on which the village of Old Deerfield is located. The high westerly bank runs very steeply down to "Long Pond" (which is evidently an old river bed), and in other places to the meadow. Toward its northern end this upper level is most narrow and is twice interrupted by valleys which cross it east and west at nearly the level of the lower and principal eastern terrace.

The east bank of the upper terrace is less steep than the western: but there are no gradual slopes, the two terraces being extremely level and all banks more or less steep. At one point on the high western side the underlying red sandstone is exposed, and this ledge has also been bared where the hillside at its south end has been dug away near a great elm which stands on the level of the meadow.

Long Pond lies westerly of the hill; Round Pond southerly of that; and another pond—for which Mr. Ashley, who owns land about it, has no name—may be the one which has been referred to as "Pine Hill Pond." Apparently the hill was for a time an island in the waters whose bottom was the present meadow. In recent times a southerly elbow of the Deerfield river kept cutting closer and closer to the northeastern bank of Pine Hill, but at the same time the peninsula within the elbow was constantly narrowing at a place some rods northerly of the hill: so finally, not many years ago, that peninsula became an island. Not long afterward the old





channel became an isolated ox bow, and the Deerfield river no longer threatens Pine Hill.

The strange plateau, with another narrow plateau superimposed upon its western side, reveals, records and retains the one-time level of an ancient lake; and the secret of its preservation, when the waters subsided and the stream found a lower level, probably lies in the sandstone foundation of its western face.

On a Sunday afternoon (April 11, 1937) John Ashley and I spent two hours exploring Pine Hill, and as we walked through the woods on the upper terrace I noted black, white and a few gray, birches; white oak and red; sugar and soft maples and toward the northern end a number of striped maples or moosewood. There were hickory, and I think ash; some sassafras and a few hornbeam (ironwood or blue beech). On the precipitous western slope I saw several good beech trees, and along the northern edge of the plateaux were a few large hemlocks and white pines. As we returned we passed through Judge Ball's open woods, which contained many good trees of average size and considerable height, though the chestnut trees and most of the tall white pines have gone.

Later in the season vegetation is further advanced and the floor of the forest bears the wild plants which add so much to the beauty of Nature's great garden. In such a secluded spot a poet should dwell. Nature and Poetry find all things possible; and left to themselves they make each picture perfect and complete, place a gem in each suitable setting: so to Pine Hill was sent a poet. Of the hill its poet wrote:

Here Nature has a garden;  
By her alone 'twas planned,  
Though wanton seems her sowing,  
She makes her garden grand.

When seeds she has been strewing  
Are scattered o'er the hill,  
She leaves them there to blossom  
And tangle as they will.





Here twining, gnarled, wild beauty  
Is kindred to the place.  
By frost and snow not hidden,  
But lent an added grace.

When the meadows were a cold white plain and the trees of Pine Hill were given added grace and beauty by a mantle of snow, my wife and I once explored the hill on snow-shoes and came upon a small black-eyed man dragging a tree to his cottage, that he might with axe and flame release its stored sunshine to turn away the winter's cold.

With head cocked on one side, he stood there in the snow amid the branches, and recited to us his pretty poem on the chickadee—a brave little bright-eyed black-capped chickadee himself, though disguised by a covering other than feathers. The incident made the "Dream-land" harmonious in all its parts, and our trip became one of those delightful memories too delicate to seem real, but too satisfactory to disbelieve.

Do you dream of the maize once laid on your breast  
By red-men who made here their camp and had rest?  
Or remember a day when the settlers passed near,  
The time Moses Chandler was ferryman here?  
How Agassiz came here; and Hitchcock was oft;  
And, latest, the hermit established his croft?

The "red-men who made here their camp" left their "barns," as the settlers called them. Mr. Sheldon says of these "excavations in the earth for storing provisions": "My attention was called by Mrs. Nancy Campbell to certain 'Indian Lookouts' on Pine Hill. These proved to be barns of considerable size." And of Indian graneries elsewhere he says: "Those examined were about four and a half feet deep. One was found to have been lined with clay." I had the pleasure of pointing out one on Pine Hill to its present owner.

After the red man and his trails, came the white man and his roads. The road from Deerfield toward the north passed by the side of Pine Hill and came to the ferry by





which one crossed to the "Green river lands," and "Moses Chandler was ferryman here." This must have been the hill's period of greatest publicity. The ferry was close to the future metropolis of this region: The confluence of streams has ever been the place near which gregarious men have built their hives of industry, and Cheapside was no exception to this rule. It was once the commercial centre of northern Hampshire, and in 1811 it nearly became the seat of government of the new County of Franklin.

Reverend Doctor Amariah Chandler, of whose life and time my father has spoken to this association, was a son of the ferryman, and in the vivacious diary of his wife—written on the doctor's sermon-paper by my mother's Aunt Mary—I have read of their driving to "Carter's land" near this ferry. "Agassiz came here, and Hitchcock": The great Agassiz was interested in Pine Hill's curious formation, and on the Albany road in Old Deerfield was the home of the famous Hitchcocks. Edward Hitchcock (1793–1864) was state geologist of Massachusetts. The ferryman and the ferry, the old road and "horse and buggy days" have all gone. The hermit-poet whom most of us remember was the last person to live on Pine Hill.

Recall how the preacher came back here, to die,  
And all of that kindred secluded now lie  
Where a white marble rests 'gainst a white birch tree?  
(Life that was; life that is and the Life to be.)  
By their lilac-drest mounds the wood-zephyr roams,  
And by long-sunken graves of their one-time homes.

Conspicuous from the north end of "the town street" of Old Deerfield is that tall "white birch tree," spared when others on the southerly part of Pine Hill were cut down. Against this tree there used to lean a white marble slab marked "1840 THE FAMILY BURIAL PLACE OF RODOLPHUS DICKINSON." When I first saw this spot the mossy mounds beneath the trees were otherwise unmarked. Not far away, on lower





ground and near a lane cut through the south-easterly bank of the hill, remains a cellar hole which reveals the site of the Dickinson house, built by the preacher's own hands.

Rodolphus Dickinson was a graduate of Yale College, a lawyer and the first clerk of the courts in this county (1811 to 1819). He became an Episcopal clergyman and had parishes in South Carolina.\* He published in 1833 "A new and corrected version of the New Testament" which demonstrated his erudition. One sentence in its preface—meticulously divided by colons, semicolons, commas and a dash or two—covers a page and a half! Under "Apostolic Productions—Matthew's History" occur the words: "Jesus took occasion to say, I entirely concur with thee, O Father."

I have a copy of this remarkable book, which was given me by the widow of my friend John D. Bouker, once register of deeds. It is bound in red leather, and stamped in gold upon its cover is the name FELICIA ANN DICKINSON. The poet of the hill told me that it had belonged to his mother Nancy Dickinson Campbell, whom her father called Felicia because of her happy disposition.

"The preacher came back here to die" in the seclusion of this wooded hill, his brilliant but eccentric mind having weakened before its body. In his "family burial place" lie "A REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIER THOMAS W. DICKINSON 1751-1835" "HIS WIFE THANKFUL FIELD 1758-1836" (Their son) "RODOLPHUS W. DICKINSON 1786-1862" "HIS WIFE NANCY HOYT 1788-1870" (Their daughter) "NANCY H. DICKINSON 1815-1895" (Her husband) "JOHN CAMPBELL" (and their son) "RODOLPHUS CAMPBELL 1848-1931."

Doubtless the Campbells were of Scotch ancestry; for Rodolphus, discovering a thistle to be sharing with him

\* See also P.V.M.A., II, 292, and III, 79.





the wooded hill, warmly welcomed the thorny weed in these words:

I would know how long you've been hidden;  
What caused you to pause on your way;  
Did you think, because I'm a Campbell,  
That you would hear the bagpipes play?

I would know from whence you were driven;  
Have heard you were under a ban;  
Did you think it safe to hide you here  
Because I'm of the Campbell clan?

You will have no use for your armor,  
You'll never be tread on by me.  
I ought to don the kilt, or the plaid,  
And do honor to such as thee.

Rodolphus' father, John M. Campbell, served for Deerfield in the Civil War, and I recall my visits to the home at the north end of Pine Hill about 45 years ago to make out pension papers for Mrs. Campbell, a pleasing little old lady who wrote the clear Spencerian hand of her remote schooldays. After she died I attended there a function more sorrowful than many a funeral. Those of you who were there will remember the auction of furnishings of that home. Mrs. John Sheldon bought there the beautiful hall clock which she presented to her sister and I bid in for my mother's sister a little oval tip-top stand.

From that time Rodolphus Dickinson Campbell lived alone on Pine Hill and seemed a part of his surroundings. After his death, and an interment in "the family burial place," the granite markers whose inscriptions I have quoted were placed by the friends who had brought comfort to his waning days. On these the name of that "(THOM)AS WELLS DICKINSON" who "DIED JAN 16 1849 AE 65" does not appear, but I deciphered that inscription on fragments of marble headstones which I found about the Campbell home-site. Other broken stones there were those of Col.





Thomas W. and Thankful D., the parents of this Thomas Wells Dickinson and his brother Reverend Rodolphus. Sheldon's Genealogy indicates that Thomas, junior, had a wife and children.

Beneath the trees on silent, secluded Pine Hill are these graves by the white birch tree, the Dickinson cellar and the bed of once-cultivated lilies growing near by: and at the opposite end of the plateau remain but the broken bits of marble and the cellar hole marking the place where the gentle poet dwelt among other children of Nature and noted growth and decay—gay woodbine and dying tree—saying to the vine:

Like emblems of love, your tendrils are growing,  
Are twining still closer by night and by day;  
And though it is doomed, your staff soon must crumble,  
You're weaving a mantle to hide its decay.

When years shall have passed, your staff it has fallen,  
Though now you're aspiring, then humble you'll be;  
And should it be autumn when I am passing,  
A gorgeous draped mantle is all I shall see.

But few see today the "twining, gnarled, wild beauty" which "is kindred to the place" where "Nature has a garden" in which she is "weaving a mantle to hide its decay." There are no signs of human life on the hill now, save the memorials of lives which have passed from it.

This "island of whispering trees" is shared by the spirits of those who here lived and loved, their ancient lilies, the seedlings of trees which shaded them and wild plants they knew, and by descendants of the squirrels and woodchucks, wood thrushes and chickadees, of their earthly days. Pine Hill, you are a place apart!

When lingering day at last comes to die,  
Your treetops are towers against flaming sky;  
When the sun thro the branches no longer is bright,  
In a beam of the moon that birch-tree shows, white;  
While all thro the meadows there moves the night breeze,  
Caressing you, Island of whispering trees.





## OFFICERS FOR 1939

*President*, Francis Nims Thompson, Greenfield.

*Vice Presidents*, Hazel Sheldon Nichols and Edward E. Whiting.

*Recording Secretary*, Margaret Harris Allen.

*Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols, Greenfield.

*Council*, the above officers and the following:

Jonathan P. Ashley, Ernest E. Coffin, Mary W. Fuller and Margaret C. Whiting for the term expiring 1940; Frank L. Boyden, Minnie Ellen Hawks, Margaret Miller and Jane Atherton Wright till 1941; Helen C. Boyden, John W. Heselton, Lucy Cutler Kellogg and Agnes P. Sheldon till 1942.

## TRUSTEES

*George Sheldon Memorial Fund*: Trustees; Agnes P. Sheldon, 1940; W. Herbert Nichols, 1941; Frank L. Boyden, 1942.

*Sheldon Publishing Fund*: Margaret C. Whiting, 1940; Hazel Sheldon Nichols, 1941; Jonathan P. Ashley, 1942.

*Old Indian House Homestead*: William L. Harris, 1940; Margaret Harris Allen, 1942; W. Herbert Nichols, 1946.

*Charlotte Alice Baker Fund*: Helen C. Boyden, Margaret Harris Allen, W. Herbert Nichols, "Curators of the Frary House Estate."

## COMMITTEES

*Executive Committee*: President, Treasurer and Frank L. Boyden.

*Finance Committee*: Hazel S. Nichols, F. N. Thompson and John W. Heselton.

*Meeting and Program*: Frank L. Boyden, Mary A. Ball and Jane A. Wright.

*Auditors*: Carlos Allen and John W. Heselton.





# POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## REPORT

This is the second of the "annuals" which will constitute Volume IX of our "History and Proceedings." It contains original matter edited and published in a limited edition under a vote by the corporation.

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Our first "annual" was cordially received by members of the P.V.M.A. and by a public interested in the Old Deerfield region: it is hoped that this will be equally acceptable.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;  
W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer*.

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.





## SEVENTIETH ANNUAL MEETING—1940

*In the Council Room* at Memorial Hall, on the afternoon of February 27, the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association held its annual meeting. The records of the 1939 meeting were read and approved and all *officers and councilors reelected*.\* Mrs. Wright presented a *tribute* to Miss N. Theresa Mellen and the president made his *annual report*.

Mr. Ashley's paper on his Old World pasture was well read by Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks; our president spoke briefly of Joseph Baldwin, a forgotten ancestor of many Deerfield families; Mrs. Kellogg told of the odd names of local places; Miss Whiting gave a charming account of a Deerfield episode; and Judge Thompson read a short account of Dr. Charles Knowlton of Ashfield, whose writings greatly reduced the birth rate in England a century ago.

The day was fine, the meeting well attended and the papers appreciatively received. The audience lingered for general discussion and friendly visiting which was later resumed at the town hall.

*The Council meeting*, following that of the corporation, heard and approved the record of its 1939 meeting, and made *appointments*.\* *Financial reports* by the treasurer and the five boards of trustees\* were also approved. Mrs. Allen reported for the Curators of the Frary House Estate, that matter was discussed at some length and a joint meeting of the Curators with the Executive Committee was agreed upon. The auditors' report was accepted and referred to the Executive Committee for any necessary action as to methods of accounting.

*In the town hall* the women of Deerfield, under the able leadership of Mrs. Henry C. Wells, furnished a capacity supper to an almost capacity gathering; and

\* Listed on page 137.





Ralph H. Oatley led the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy in a series of delightful songs. The P.V.M.A. is most grateful.

*The evening papers* were heard by a large and appreciative audience. Miss Harriet E. Childs read "Frary House—1685," an interesting and informing paper by Miss Emma L. Coleman of Boston who long lived in the fine old house which Miss C. Alice Baker devised to the Memorial Association; Professor Burnett, of the academy's department of geology, spoke with clarity and humor of the pre-history of the Deerfield valley; and Mr. Severance, of the Greenfield Recorder-Gazette, gave a graphic picture of the devastation wrought by the hurricane-flood of 1938, including detailed data which make his paper a valuable record of that historic event. The meeting adjourned soon after nine o'clock.

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## REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT

Your executive committee has little unusual to report as to 1939 except that we have acquired the occupancy of Frary House in addition to the legal title which came to us at the death of C. Alice Baker. This property is in charge of the "Curators of the Frary House Estate," who also act as trustees of the \$1,000 fund for its maintenance, and on those subjects they will report.

By Miss Baker's will she provided that at Frary House "admission fees shall be the same as at Memorial Hall" while fees are charged at the hall. Fees of 25¢ for adults and 10¢ for children have been collected at the hall this summer, and the hall has been open five Sunday afternoons. With both buildings open this coming season, we will be able to determine if these are the proper charges.

Being somewhat fearful of the total expense of insurance and repairs on Frary House—including those of preparing the south part of the ground floor for occu-





pancy this coming spring "by a spinster, or widow without young children, who shall be the caretaker"—we postponed publication of Vol. VIII of our "Proceedings." It was made ready in the spring of 1938 for printing, and your committee feels that it must be published this year, though these publications cost us double the prices at which they are sold.

Three months after our 1939 meeting, Mrs. Sheldon's faithful co-worker, Miss Mellen, ended her labors. I spoke a year ago of the excellence of her service, and soon Mrs. Wright will read a tribute to her memory. We made no permanent appointment of a Keeper of the Sheldon Collection, but employed the Misses Hartwell of Greenfield and Mrs. and Miss Biddle of Deerfield when they were free from other duties. Your executive committee will appoint a Keeper and the Frary House curators will appoint a Caretaker for the coming year.

Mrs. Biddle reports that people from 39 different states and the District of Columbia, and from nine foreign countries including Australia and Japan, have visited Memorial Hall. The receipts from admissions amounted to \$600.80. We have been presented with a beautiful pewter communion set, displayed in a glass case, from the old church in Hawley. Thirty-five books and pamphlets are among the other contributions. We would be glad to receive more fine old china for the shelves of the Hackley cupboard.

Income from the George Sheldon Memorial Fund, received a year ago, has made it financially possible for us to carry on during days of reduced returns; but most welcome to the P.V.M.A. would be an endowment for maintenance of Frary House. This and the publication of original manuscripts are two important departments of our work; and with each of them adequately financed, Memorial Hall and its Sheldon Collection could be more readily cared for and exhibited.

Our seventy-year-old association owes everything to the Sheldons and those other faithful friends who have





during the generations contributed thought, time and money. I wish that your president of today might somewhat approximate Mrs. Sheldon's generous contribution of constant attention. That has been impossible, especially during the last few months, but you may be encouraged to hear that he has already been promised two of the papers for the 1941 meeting.

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## A TRIBUTE TO MISS MELLEN

BY JANE ATHERTON WRIGHT

Nettie Theresa Mellen was born in Redding, Connecticut, in 1869, the daughter of James and Emaline Whitehouse Mellen. The father of James Mellen had emigrated to this country from Scotland when a boy and the parents of Mrs. Mellen were born in England. From Connecticut James Mellen turned his way northward and while his three children were young bought a large farm in South Hadley, about a mile from Mount Holyoke College. Here Miss Mellen and her brother and sister spent a happy childhood, and here she found her love of nature which was intensified with the passing years.

She was an omnivorous reader and preferred staying at home with her books to joining in the social activities of the country community in which she lived. She displayed such marked ability as a student in her grade work that she was sent to Springfield to live with an uncle, that she might enjoy the advantages of the Springfield high school instead of attending that in South Hadley. From this school she graduated with high honors and then entered the Westfield Normal School, at that time under the presidency of James C. Greenough, to prepare for her chosen work as a teacher.

It was here that I first met her and admired and respected her scholarship, for she was an outstanding figure in any class of which she was a member. On account





of her reserve I knew her very slightly, and it was only when we were thrown together again the following year in Montague City, where she had secured a position as teacher after graduating from Westfield Normal School, that I came to know her better. I was living there with my parents and, as she was boarding near by, I began to invite her to our home, first from a sense of duty and then, as I penetrated the crust of that reserve, from a great joy in her companionship.

We had two big things in common—love of books and love of nature. We read together and roamed the fields, finding new specimens of wild flowers; and thus was laid the foundation of what proved to be a life-long friendship. After that year our paths diverged, as she was called to teach first at Needham and then at Hyde Park, now a part of greater Boston. She was very successful in her work as a teacher, but her heart was never in it as she was always longing for the flowery meadows, the wooded hills and babbling streams of her beloved New England.

However, with characteristic thoroughness, she took advantage of the many opportunities open to her as a city dweller, one of which was to obtain a degree from the Institute of Technology in Boston for an extension course for teachers in mineralogy and geology. She was a great lover of the best music and was able to attend the concerts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and to hear in Grand Opera the great figures of that day, Nordica, Melba, Calvé and the De Reszkés.

She also enjoyed to the full the great actors and actresses then playing at the Boston theatres. Among her books was a theatre record, and here were the names of Rehan, Irving, Terry, Sothorn, Marlowe, Mansfield, Crane, Mrs. Fiske and many others; each page containing pictures of the artist, the date, her criticism of the performance etc., all written in the old-fashioned Spencerian hand, so clear that he who runs may read.

After several years of city life she resigned her posi-





tion in Hyde Park on account of the ill health of her mother, returned to South Hadley and started in the poultry business on her father's farm. She enjoyed this outdoor country life exceedingly until, after a few years, her mother became very ill and passed away. Miss Mellen continued to carry on her poultry business until her father's second marriage, when it seemed advisable to find other occupation.

She hesitated to return to teaching, as she much preferred the country life to which she had again become accustomed. Until some satisfactory solution of the problem could be found, I invited her to come to our home and assist me in the cares of the household and of three lively children. This she did, and during this time I happened to be chatting with Mrs. Sheldon one day and she told me of some difficulty she was having in finding enough people to read to Mr. Sheldon. I told her that I had a friend staying with me who read aloud well and who enjoyed it. She thanked me and said she would bear it in mind, and it was not long after that she called me up and asked if that friend was still with me and, if so, to have her come down that evening.

Mr. Sheldon was delighted with her reading and from that time she became one of his regular readers, going down two or three times a week to read aloud to him. This had been going on for about three months when Miss Mellen brought me the message that Mr. Sheldon wished to see me about something. When I arrived, and after the usual greetings, he said with characteristic frankness, "Mrs. Wright, you have something that I want, and I have sent for you to talk it over." I couldn't imagine what he meant, and then he explained that it was Miss Mellen and that he wanted her for the position of assistant curator at Memorial Hall, that she possessed just the desirable qualifications for carrying on that work; but that he didn't want any hard feelings, so had said nothing about it to her until he could talk with me. I told him that Miss Mellen was looking for work that





would be in keeping with her ability and training, but that as part of the remuneration was the rent of Red Cottage I didn't see just how it could be managed. However, I went home and told Miss Mellen about it and in the end it was arranged.

She owned a chamber set and stove; and a few things from Mrs. Sheldon's attic and ours, together with a shower of kitchen utensils and dishes given by a group of friends to properly celebrate the approaching union of Miss Nettie Mellen and Mr. Memorial Hall, started her out in her new abode, from whence she served the P.V.M.A. for 26 years, losing in that time only a half day on account of illness. She brought to her new task all the fidelity, scrupulous honesty, nicety of detail and high standard of attainment which had characterized her work as a teacher, and in addition she loved her work and she loved Deerfield. She had the greatest respect and admiration for the residents of Deerfield and always believed them to be a vastly superior group of people.

To satisfy her sense of beauty she immediately began putting in shrubs, perennials and climbing vines; not only around Red Cottage and its boundary lines, but also along the east end of Memorial Hall there began to appear a gay procession of summer flowers. Lilacs, forsythia, spirea, bright beds of iris, tulips and peonies were planted; and over the one-time bare piazza facing the western hills climbed honeysuckle and rambler roses. Back of the cottage every inch of land was utilized, not only by all kinds of annuals and perennials, but also, until the putting through of the state road took off a goodly share of the back yard, by a well stocked vegetable garden. This gave her three full-sized jobs, and for each she demanded of herself perfection—or as near perfection as was humanly attainable.

That she might keep her little home beautiful with the beauty that comes of spotless cleanliness and perfect order she arose at five, and by the time her duties at Memorial Hall began, her washing, ironing, cleaning and





cooking were out of the way and everything about her shining and immaculate. Then as soon as her duties at the hall were over at night and a hasty supper partaken of, she was free to labor in her beloved garden, weeding, transplanting, planning for fresh beauties, until driven in by the gathering shadows.

For years it was her habit on Sunday afternoons to roam the hills for flowers in their season. It was she who always brought home the first pussy willows in the spring, who knew where the first hepaticas and may-flowers could be found, and who wound up the season by gathering sprays of bittersweet and masses of witch-hazel.

For many years she devoted one evening in each week to reading aloud to Mrs. Sheldon, and together they enjoyed the best articles in the current *Atlantic Monthly*, the best of recent fiction, and more solid food from books concerning subjects dear to Mrs. Sheldon's heart. Among Miss Mellen's treasures I found a pencilled note from which I quote: "My dear Friend—I do not know of any remembrance of our delightful evenings together that I would rather give you than this little watch. May you hear it ticking of our friendship many years to come. Yours as ever, Jennie Arms Sheldon."

Miss Mellen resigned from her work on Saturday, May 26, and passed on peacefully on June 4, 1939. Emerson has said: "When we look at ourselves in the light of the past, we see that our lives are embosomed in Beauty." Truly her life was ever embosomed in beauty—the beauty of flowers and music and of humble labors lovingly performed. I like to think that it may be said of her: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Thou hast been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things."





## FRARY HOUSE—1685

BY EMMA L. COLEMAN

“Frary House” is the oldest house in the County of Franklin. With the home of Samuel Carter, now the ell of “The Manse,” it is all that is left of seventeenth century buildings in the village of Old Deerfield.\* It has had many owners; notably Samson Frary who built it, Salah Barnard who enlarged it and C. Alice Baker who saved it from destruction. It was owned by a Frary until 1752. In 1890 Miss Baker, seventh in descent from the builder, gave the house the name it now bears.

It was well built, as is shown by the massive chimney-stack set upon great field-stones laid in clay, the generous hearthstone of the kitchen, the axe-hewn timbers, the heavy oak posts and the good lines of the roof. Samson Frary built in perilous days, when “there was neither time for anything non-essential, nor place for anything flimsy and impermanent.” He would know the house if he came back, for the lines of the original house are unchanged: if he entered he would see such changes as Miss Baker found essential to comfortable living, and the suitable furnishings of her home.

## THE FRARYS

Who was Samson Frary and how did he happen to make his home in the beautiful valley? He was the son of John and Prudence, who were very early settlers in Dedham, where John was one of the “8 p’sons . . . sett a part by ye lord” to enter “into sollem’e covenant with ye lord & one another” in founding the church in 1638.

Our forebears, like their descendants, were restless

\* Miss Margaret Miller, long resident in the John Nims house, believes its eastern end to have existed before 1700, and it seems probable that one of its two chimneys with ovens served the Godfrey Nims house which burned in 1694. Editor.





folk, always seeking new lands, always pushing on. Only five years after the settlement of Watertown, its people, afraid of being "ruinated" by too many inhabitants, asked the General Court to permit some of them to take up grants higher up the river, and so Dedham was begun.

But the Dedham people, feeling "streighend at their doores by other tounes & rocky lands" asked for "a parcell of upland & meadow." That was given, and a distinct village, still within the grant, became Medfield. To Medfield went John Frary, and there his son Samson married Mary, daughter of Robert Daniel of Watertown and Cambridge.

But restlessly Samson pushed on. He, his wife and their two little girls, four and six years of age, went to Hadley, where in that part which became Hatfield, Eleazer Frary was living. The difficult journey must have been made by the narrow Bay Path until, at Brookfield, they turned toward the northwest. The Frarys did not long tarry there. Poor Mary! Let us hope that she shared her husband's eager spirit of adventure, for that soon carried them higher up the valley to Pocumtuck, which in 1674 became Deerfield.

The Inhabitants of Dedham were the "Proprietors of the 8,000 acres at Pocumtuck" and when "an Artiste" engaged upon "as moderat tearmes as might be to laye out the Lotts" came with the Dedham committee, he found that two men, impatient of delay, were already making homes there. Robert Hinsdell had plowed, and at the north end of what became "the town street" Frary had dug "a celer."

In the primitive dwelling built upon that cellar,\* the Frary family must have lived, more or less uncomfortably, until the tragedy of Bloody Brook drove all the people to the towns below. When Philip's War was over

\* The "banke or falling ridge of land at Samson Frary's celer"—perhaps the "celer" was but "a sort of a house" where "he dug a hole in the sid Hill" like that described in "An Old Scrap of Paper" in P.V.M.A., VIII. Editor.





and people drifted back, Frary House was built, but why was it not built on the lot which Samson Frary drew? How did he get the right to build on one of Peter Woodward's lots?

Who can answer? Perhaps he wished to live opposite his friend Hinsdell:\* perhaps, because of Indian alarms, he felt more safe with nearer neighbors; but on Woodward's lot he did build his home, leisurely and honestly. Mr. Sheldon thought it might have been in 1683, but there Frary was certainly living in 1685. It was not until 1719 that Woodward gave a quitclaim deed to Nathaniel, son of Samson, and in the same year Nathaniel sold his father's own lot.

#### OCCUPANTS

In 1704 Samson, his wife and their orphaned grandchild, Mercy Root, were apparently the only occupants of the house. Samson and the child were killed, and lie with "The Dead of 1704." Mary, the wife, was about 64 years old. She, "captivated and lacking vigor to endure," was slain by her Indian master on the journey toward Canada; "for their manner was if any loitered to kill them." Nathaniel could not have been in Deerfield, as his name is not among those of the defenders or pursuers.

In 1752 his widow, reserving one room for herself, sold the house to Joseph Barnard, the meticulous builder of Willard House, now called The Manse. Probably neither he nor the next owner, David Arms, a joiner of Bloody Brook or South Deerfield, ever lived in the house.

In 1763 Salah Barnard, who had been a soldier, bought for 175 pounds the house built by Frary. Now choosing the ways of peace, he became a landlord and a store-keeper. When he was young and going out to war he went to the next house south to say good-bye to his

\* There lived Samuel Hinsdell, slain at Bloody Brook; and Mehuman Hinsdell, captured 1704 with his cousin, Josiah Rising. Miss Margaret Whiting now lives there. Editor.





friends Jeremiah and Mary Nims: seeing their baby in the cradle he bade the mother to keep her until he came back to marry her. Twenty years later, in 1765, they walked together across the greensward which separated her old home from the new.

Perhaps it was before his marriage that Barnard built the addition to Frary House, including the beautiful ballroom and the bar room or store; but we may be sure that the young wife liked to dance above-stairs while he poured cider below. From this front room in the southwest corner of the house, stairs lead to the cellar where the cider was kept. For many years and by many men this room was used as a store; and in 1812, more space being needed, a small building was erected in front of it. This was later removed by Pliny Arms to the rear and used as a kitchen.

A house is the shelter of family life: one generation after another lives and dies beneath its roof. Of those who lived here we know little. For nearly seventy years previous to 1876 the two parts, north and south, Frary House and Barnard House, had separate owners. The lot on which Frary House was built extended from land owned for more than two centuries by the Nims family to land on which now stands the parsonage. It seems probable that a small sandstone slab, unearthed before Frary House, marked the limit of the highway.

#### AS A TAVERN

To Deerfield, as to all New England towns, pre-revolutionary days brought excitement, and taverns were the gathering places for discussion. Here the majority of the townsmen were tories or loyalists. They were welcomed by David Hoyt in the Old Indian House and by Miss Baker's grandfather Major Seth Catlin, whose inn stood upon what was long the Wells lot. The Whigs sought David Saxton and doubtless his opposite neighbor Salah Barnard, whose large room offered hospitality for the larger meetings.





The Revolution brought to our old house a guest then noted and since notorious: Benedict Arnold. Having been commissioned as colonel, he was sent to western Massachusetts to recruit men to attack Ticonderoga. To feed them, he bought of Thomas W. Dickinson of Deerfield (later a colonel), 15,000 pounds of beef. The interview took place, said Dickinson's daughter Clarissa (who died in 1862), in the parlor of Frary House; instead of in the bar room—too ordinary a place for such as Arnold.

Arnold did not tarry in Deerfield to recruit men, but hurried on to Vermont. He was too late: to Ethan Allen\* the fort was surrendered. Thomas Dickinson, with his young brother Consider, followed Arnold with the cattle, receiving for his services only the glass of liquor from the pretty cupboard with its sliding shelf in the northwest room of Frary House.

#### OTHER GUESTS

While Augustus Lyman, blacksmith of Belcher-town, was host of the inn, there came to it a guest of royal blood. The Lyman's married daughter, living in Brighton, had a friend who was master of a vessel which sailed between Boston and the Sandwich Islands; and when he brought from there a youth of about sixteen years, it was suggested that the academy at Deerfield would be a good school for him to attend. So the boy came and appears on the list of pupils as "John Meek": think of that as the name of the heir-apparent to a throne! "Cryamakoo" was probably too difficult for our New England tongues, so he borrowed the name of the Boston sailor. But the youth died before his brother King Kamehameha, and never ruled the Sandwich Islands. Miss Fanny Wilson described him as a handsome, dark-skinned boy, short in stature. Much excited by his first snow-storm, he ran into the house crying that the sky was full of feathers.

\* A grandson of Deerfield: see Sheldon's genealogies, p. 23.





A visitor whom we must especially remember was a little girl who came just about a hundred years ago to visit her grandparents who lived in the southerly rooms. It was an all-day journey by stagecoach from Springfield. She and her kitten sat "on top," where the driver, for safety, tucked her under the boot, which she thought was a very funny name. After being put to bed in the spare room she was disturbed by a mouse, and went scurrying down the stairs—frightened, but ashamed because she had promised to be a brave girl. Then her grandmother went with her to a very large room; and this was C. Alice Baker's introduction to the room in which she was often to be the gracious hostess!\*

#### AT THE OLD TAVERN

On April 18, 1797, the first meeting of the trustees of Deerfield Academy was held at the tavern of Erastus Barnard.† This was the same school in which Miss Baker and earlier members of her family were pupils; the school in which she did her first teaching and found her life-long friend and fellow-worker, Susan Minot Lane, who came to Deerfield and became "preceptress" and Miss Baker's superior.

Of course, the town-folk came here to dance. The first date found is in 1799, when "Squire John Williams" wrote in his cash book "1 s. towards fiddlers at Erastus Barnard's wedding." At this period invitations to dance were printed on cards, of the size of a visiting card, and were sent in the names of "managers." The managers sought their lady guests at their homes and escorted them to "the Room." Three such invitations hang in the ball room. One reads "Exhibition Ball. The Honor of Miss Mercy Sheldon's Company is requested at E. Barnard's Hall at 7 o'clock P.M. Deerfield Sept. 2, 1802." The next year she is "Desired to attend at six o'clock,"

\* See Mrs. Sheldon's paper on Miss Baker, V, P.V.M.A. 352.

† This meeting for organization of an academy of national reputation is described at page 843 of the History of Deerfield. Editor.





and in June, 1803, a "Public Ball" is to begin at five. Surely the farmer boys would find it more convenient to begin at five p.m. than to finish at five a.m.

Another party held in 1812, was long remembered. To this "Aunt Annie Hinsdale," having no children of her own, invited 24 mothers of "the Street" to come with their 24 babies, born within the year.

The drama was not neglected, for in 1814 a youth of the village wrote and presented "The Emancipation of Europe or the Downfall of Bonaparte." The author is remembered, not as a great playwright, but as President Edward Hitchcock, of Amherst College.

Independence Day celebrations were held in the ball room. In 1814 Edward Hitchcock's oration was given under the auspices of the "Washington Benevolent Society," and "The Friends of Washington and of Correct Principles" were "respectfully invited to join the Procession & the festivities of the day."

#### MISS BAKER'S PURCHASE

Such was the past of Frary House; but when Miss Baker bought it in 1890 from the heirs of John Kelliher,\* the part built by her ancestor Samson Frary was almost a ruin. There was a hole in the roof; the lean-to leaned over-much; there were no windows in the parlor, which was then used for sorting tobacco and was the resort of idle children; a hen had made her nest in the little entry.

When asked why she had bought it, Miss Baker made one of three replies: To rescue it; To dance in it; To make a summer home for her mother—though not intending to spend entire summers in the valley. All three reasons were justified, but the purchase took both courage and vision. A friend and neighbor told her, in New England parlance, that if she bought that house she "ought to be committed." As we went through it in our first inspection, and literally went through a floor-board

\* Deed June 30, 1890: book 413, page 132, Registry of Deeds. Editor.





which broke beneath our feet, there seemed some justification for his viewpoint, but on that first day Miss Baker's mind saw it restored almost as it stands today.

The small entry, with its pretty staircase, was in front of the huge middle chimney; on the north side a parlor and bedroom, and on the south a "living-room or hall." Behind these was the kitchen. Above were parlor and living-room chambers, and under the slope of the roof a ladder-like staircase led to the garret. The kitchen, which was made into a dining room, was in a sad state. Its length, as was the fashion of old, well-proportioned houses, is twice its breadth. A charmingly graceful elm hugged the three east windows and had to be sacrificed because of the extension which was made for greater comfort.

The chimney-stack was large and unsafe—so unsafe that it had to be taken down to the ground floor, and so large that then the old house seemed but a big hole surrounded by three small rooms and a staircase. The fireplace had to be rebuilt, but the broken hearthstone was replaced, as was the crane and oven-door. To make sure that the big old bricks, blackened by two hundred years of smoke, were not rejected by the masons, Miss Baker overlooked the work and actually handled the bricks of her choice; causing an old Irishman to say "I've worked in brick for many a year, but I niver had a lady tinder before."

The pilasters of the entrance, made perhaps when the clapboards were placed, had lost their caps and bases. The original front door was missing. It must have been, like those of the period, made of two thicknesses of boards at right angles and perhaps studded with heavy nails as was the door of the Indian house. Perhaps the door had been used for fuel as had many of less importance. I recall that a gay circus-poster adorned the boards which filled the space. The present double door came from a house in Greenfield Meadows which had been the homestead and tavern of Captain Ebenezer





Wells, born in 1723 in Deerfield. With the door, in its cracked green paint, came its bull's-eye glass and the strong protecting bar. The heavy top-bolt came from the Barnard-Jenks house, and the lock and fastenings for bar from the "old town house."

#### HOUSE CONSTRUCTION

Our early building traditions were, of course, brought from England, and, sooner or later, adapted to our harsher climate. Our chimney-stacks had to be huge because of the generous proportions of the fireplaces. Here, as there, glass was scarce. In early houses there were very small casement windows, usually with diamond panes. Double-hung windows were not used before the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Miss Baker was fortunate in finding windows with heavy muntin, and more or less distorted and bubbly glass to replace broken panes.

The exterior may have been of primitive weather boarding—or colonial siding, which means very wide pine boards that the carpenter ornamented with chamfered edges; and in this house the boards were so wide that the builder added horizontal mouldings. The probability is based upon our having found this boarding when cutting through the wall between the old and newer parts of the house,\* and it is emphasized by the finding of similar siding on the John Williams house, built a few years later. It is not known how early clapboards were added, but "Ryvers of Clapboards, singles and lathes" were among our earliest workers. These old clapboards are of pine and are fastened with hand-wrought nails, doubtless forged from English iron.

#### RECONSTRUCTION

Frary House is a restful place because of its admirable proportions. One feels this upon entering the

\* The south wall of Frary House, to which Barnard House was added.





parlor. There the chimney-breast and a partition are paneled: other walls are plastered above a paneled wainscot. Over the fireplace were a score of layers of wallpaper and cotton; the law of "strip before you repaper" not having been observed. This fireplace was made smaller and blue biblical tiles (found in an old house in Newport, R. I.), were set around it; but Miss Baker regretted having used Dutch tiles at this distance from a seaport. The mantel-shelf was a concession, to provide a place for clock and candle sticks.

By making a wider opening, the bedroom became a connecting parlor which, because of the pictures we hung in it, was called the Canada room; and back of this was made a new kitchen. The room at the right of the front door is called the "Pewter Room." The shelves which hold the pewter occupy the space of a former opening into Barnard House. This room had a very large fireplace, with an oven which was not rebuilt. In the sandstone lintel is a small square recess for the flint and tinder box.

Miss Baker was very fortunate in having the aid of Mr. Sheldon, Mr. Horatio Hoyt and his son Clarence, all of whom took the greatest interest in this restoration. I remember that one night we were called from our supper to admire Mr. Hoyt's cart, piled high with treasures he had rescued from the woodpile of an owner who didn't like "old wooden closets and partitions"—which were indeed treasures for the dining room.

In Samson Frary's day cupboards were few and closets were none. For the china a small closet was built under some (new) back stairs and a fine panel from the Junkins house in York, Maine, makes its door. That house was tenanted only by hens when Miss Baker found, scrubbed and preserved the panel. The most interesting bit of wood in the dining room is the door of another small cupboard, as it is a part of that siding which may have been the original exterior of the house. It shows the chamfered moulding.





Miss Baker always loved old things, and from her Cambridge garret she brought her hoardings. From the Oliver Wendell Holmes house, which was next her own home in that city, she brought panels and drawers taken from the room in which the American generals planned the battle of Bunker Hill, and from which, as their headquarters, they set forth after prayer on the Common. The summer-tree in this dining room came from the Smead house (which stood north of the home of the Misses Brown); the floor joists were taken from "Uncle Sol Williams'" barn; and some of the paneling, grown a beautiful brown with the years, was in the Old Indian House and later in the woodshed of the house built upon its site.

Above-stairs in Frary House, the parlor bedroom is beautiful with time-stained wainscoting and summer-tree. The panels had been covered with a greenish water-color stain which was scraped off with glass. The small wall cupboard has a secret sliding base. The opposite room was made smaller, that the one behind, in the shed-like space under the lean-to, might be enlarged. Being given the choice of fireplace or closet, I chose the latter, and the rebuilt chimney was made a little smaller at that place.

The third bedroom is lighted by east dormer windows which do not spoil the line of the roof. In that room are exposed the big oak posts which support the frame of the house. These show marks of the axe, having been smoothed but little. From this room, as from the dining room below, a door leads into the newer part of the house, which Miss Baker called Barnard House in memory of its builder.

I have spoken of the store or bar room which was the front room of this part of the house. Behind this is the large chimney and the small square entry into which opens the pretty south door. On the entry walls there was left enough plaster to show the design and its pinkish color, and these clever Mrs. Wynne reproduced for





Miss Baker. The entry also opens into a more pretentious room which may have been the tavern parlor. It has a good fireplace, panels and sliding shutters with clumsy buttons. The walls were stenciled with cherries of an unusual color—blue, as I remember them.

On the walls of the two entries and their connecting staircase (northerly of these rooms) is an old paper which was brought to Boston in the early 1800's by Henry King Hoyt when he was in the legislature. His wife kept it in a linen bag in her garret until she gave it to Miss Baker. The paper was printed in small squares. Many were the treasures which came from that attic. Once Miss Baker expressed a wish for an old sickle: Mrs. Hoyt said "There is one here" and brought it to her. I exclaimed "I never knew anything like this house; I believe if I should ask for a red crêpe ball dress, you would produce it!"—and she did!

At the head of the stairs is the ball room, beautiful in its proportions, with coved ceiling and with recesses each side of the fireplace at its further end. These, like the eight windows, are edged with a delicate rope moulding. Fortunately, this room had not been seriously harmed during the days of its lesser glory. For family needs some partitions had been built, but these did not reach the ceiling. We could dance upon the floors of 1765 and sit upon the raised box-seats, as did the ladies of old, but these are not now hinged as when the grandmothers placed their red cloaks within. The room is lighted by candles in a tin chandelier which had been in a Vermont tavern—not the Catamount, as has been stated. Opposite the fireplace is a little balcony for the fiddler. For this, "Aunt Tirza" Williams, who was nearly a hundred years old, was responsible; for, during the restoration, she asked if "Alice" had found "the funny little cubby-hole at the west end," where she as a child used to go to watch her father and mother dance. Patched plastering revealed the spot, and a Boston architect made the drawings for the pretty railing. This balcony is reached by a





cramped stairway in what appears to be a clothes closet for the bedroom in the southwest corner of the house.

#### LIFE IN THE BALL ROOM

There could never have been a more beautiful ball in the old house than the house-warming given by Miss Baker in 1892, to which she asked the people of the village and her other friends to come in eighteenth century costume. The guests were received in the parlor, announced by our kind gardener masquerading in powdered wig and silk stockings! Being English, he dropped his aitches, to our delight.

A group of musicians played in the dining room, lighted, as was the whole house, by few lamps and many candles. Two rooms in Barnard House were furnished with card tables, and the gayly clad players added much to the picture. Miss Baker,—blue-eyed and blue-dressed, with a lace petticoat, blue feathers in her hair and a miniature of Washington at her throat,—with her cousin Mr. John Sheldon, led her guests through the parlor and dining room, up the stairs to the ball room where John Putnam, the colored fiddler of Greenfield, was waiting in the balcony to “call off.” A white fiddler stood behind him. Before the ball, Putnam came down to instruct us in the intricacies of the difficult old dances, many of which Miss Baker knew in her girlhood. She and Mr. Sheldon stood at the head of the lines as they formed for “Hull’s Victory,” which was followed by “Chase the Lady,” “Twin Sisters” and “The Ladies’ Triumph.”

A villager later described the ball to a visiting stranger, saying: “You don’t know Miss Baker; never heard of her ball? Why, they came from Boston and New York, Hartford, Springfield and the Adirondacks; they had hair-dressers and costumers and they danced the mignonette!” But we did not; we danced the Pavane, an older, more beautiful and difficult dance than the minuet.

The room was probably more variously used in Miss





Baker's day than ever before. In it, we organized the local Red Cross. To it, we sent invitations for a "braiding bee" to the women who had, years before, braided palm-leaf hats; and the first basket was sold, before it was completed, to a lady from San Francisco. Church services were held there while repairs were being made on the meeting-house; and there was a kindergarten exhibition. There was a concert of such music as Deerfield might have offered in the eighteenth century. And there were evenings with Kinder Symphonies and real Chamber Music, both amateur and professional, as friends were kind. We had much good singing and many merry dances.

Mrs. Mary P. Wells Smith read to children-guests from her then unpublished Stephen Williams tale, and Mr. J. Wells Champney gave two charming readings of Cable's Southern Stories. One evening Mrs. Madeline (Yale) Wynne repeated from memory the story of "*Peer Gynt*," which was illustrated by the music of the Suite and some Grieg songs.

After the beautiful World's Fair of 1893, several guests spoke of the things that had most interested them. Among these was Miss Helen Nicolay, daughter of Lincoln's secretary; and her subject was Art. Mr. Latham, the young principal of the academy, gave us the teacher's point of view colored by that of the bridegroom; and Wright Root of Wapping, who had served there as a chair-boy, told us about his experiences.

Our "Wednesday Mornings," which continued for two or three years, began when Mrs. Elizabeth Champney read chapters from an unpublished book while a group of friends listened and worked. Then several clever friends read from manuscripts, and Mrs. Twitchell came from Greenfield to talk about the beginnings of the Atlantic Monthly, published by the firm of which her father was a member. Jennie M. Arms (who was later Mrs. Sheldon) talked about Connecticut River claystones; and Mrs. Arthur Ball told us of Komura, later





the distinguished diplomatist who was sent to Washington from Japan. He had lived one summer in her father's family.

Admiral Higginson, who had been one of Miss Baker's pupils at the academy, talked to us once; and a banner day was that on which he brought with him Admirals Cook and Clark and they described the battle of Santiago. Clark, of the "Brooklyn," spoke with a big chart before him, and the other men added a word now and then. He thrilled us by describing the approach of a battleship, on a day during the siege when smoke made vision difficult. He thought it was Higginson's "Massachusetts," which had gone off to coal; but, lo! it was Clark's "Oregon," which had been lost to knowledge for "two silent anxious weeks," and now after the amazing voyage of 15,000 miles from San Francisco, reported "Ready for action."

On another Wednesday, Mr. Hosmer\* who, when young, had left the pulpit of our church to fight for the Union, talked about Sacajawea, who had in 1804 guided Lewis and Clark safely through the wilderness and through Indian tribes on their perilous journey to the northwest. Admiral Clark was present and, when asked if the Captain Clark of our generation would not tell us about his own return from the northwest, answered with a smile: "It was an easy sail." When speakers were lacking, Miss Baker was ready: sometimes with a carefully prepared paper; sometimes with a local subject, such as "Some Indian Visitors" who did not come to kill, and "Brick-making" in a yard beyond Memorial Hall.

In September, 1908, Miss Baker's last summer in Deerfield, we held a "Bizarre Bazaar." In the ball room Miss Mabel Brown and Messrs. William Allen and William Hutchins gave "Box and Cox"; Mrs. Gertrude

\* Rev. James K. Hosmer of Deerfield, author of "The Color Guard," and Rev. Samuel Fiske, native of Shelburne and author of "Dunn, Browne in the Army," were two of those who in the sombre sixties offered their young lives upon the altar of Freedom. Editor.





Ashley led a Kinder-Symphony orchestra and Miss Trowbridge (now Mrs. Arthur N. Fuller) added songs to the programme; and out of doors and in the barn were other attractions. The day was a great success, for we sent a thousand dollars to the Franklin County Hospital and there were at least ten, possibly twelve, automobiles in Old Deerfield street!

Such was life a generation or more ago in the house that C. Alice Baker, descendant of Samson Frary, saved and loved, filled with beautiful things, and leaves to posterity in the care of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association.\*

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## A DEERFIELD EPISODE

BY MARGARET C. WHITING

June stillness rested among the high elms that bent their long branches to make a green lane of the single roadway which divided the rows of old gray houses in our village. The road was a mile long, running as straight as need be to hold the North Star at the upper end of its course, and we called it 'The Street. Innocent of artificial surfacing, the way was sandy in summer, deep mud in spring and a snowy track between drifts in winter; it knew no other use than that of heavy farm wagons and light-running buggies, or sleds and "cutters" which met the alternating conditions of the seasons, with the adaptability demanded by their drivers. In winter oxen broke a tunnel between the piled snowbanks that was so narrow turning-out places at intervals were dug at the sides. Pedestrians walked in the track thus made for teams. They fared as best they could when they met one. Young folk waded into the drifts; elderly women have been known to boldly sit down backwards in the snow piles, and draw up their feet to escape a collision.

\* See notice at bottom of page 137.





In June, however, the villagers went on their errands along hard earthen paths between grassy banks where the old trees stood in close companionship with the door-yards they shaded, and the shifting sunlight made patterns across the road and flickered upon the small-paned windows that looked out upon the rural life following through the generations that made the village. Men had made the little settlement as nearly as possible like their forsaken English hamlets; if the habits of the early days, when the first comer had built his log house on his allotted holding, had gradually given way to modifying influences the changes had come slowly, and a Sunday morning in June was quietness itself with old-fashioned calm; the sleeping houses were closed yet awhile, for their owners "lay till six" of a Sabbath and their drowsy self-indulgence affected even the farm yard inhabitants to preserve the stillness.

At four o'clock it was shadowy with a shimmering forecast of the coming dawn; misty and dewy, too near the night's darkness to be quite reckoned as light. The hour was filled only with a gray calm. Motionless the trees, the houses. Time itself was but a suspended moment. And then—Magic!

The vague mists gathered into a shape, and moved. Noiseless under the trees, pacing on slow and soundless pads in the dim air, waving before his huge frame a meditative trunk that kept time to his progress, a great gray elephant. Solitary, serene, majestic, he was as if regally self-evoked in the still June Sunday morning that did not wake to see him pass through the village street. India's search for the calm of perfect peace, miraculously brought to hardy-minded New England. Did the old trees gather their branches closer to simulate the memory of the jungle, were the aging Yankee houses faintly aware of ancient temples, did the drowsy farmer-folk turn on pillows strangely scented with an unknown fragrance, and did not a sudden whiff of heady marigolds





in their own gardens disturb their dreams with an unfamiliar suggestion?

If the people did not rouse to glimpse their visitor as he pursued his silent way, were the wisps of mist about his bulk like a breath of incense, emanations from his old, old mind that veiled his thoughts? His small, attentive eyes gave no hint of what they saw in such an alien world of sleeping houses. In that silence he hardly seemed to move; his gently swaying trunk, the slow shambling of his great feet, the slight lift and droop of his huge head and the fall of his haughty ears, the shapeless massiveness that was his body were strangely imponderable, as though magic alone was responsible for his presence.

The cloudy hour of dawn seemed to thicken about his flanks, his form grew indistinct in the luminous rays of increasing light that drifted between the trees,—noiseless as he had come, he disappeared, melting into the further reaches of the road he trod. He was gone. The roadway was an empty green lane in the old New England village, that only knew of his coming by the foot-prints in the dust that marked his going.

All India had entered our village and left it, still asleep.

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## DEERFIELD'S YESTERDAY AS TOLD BY ITS TODAY

BY GEORGE B. BURNETT

Geology is perhaps a rather poorly classified subject. In our schools and colleges we find it listed as a science. We find, however, that scientists consider it a history. It is because of this fact that it becomes a suitable matter for discussion at a historical society meeting.

This history is composed of the most accurate records it is possible to leave. There are no written words with doubtful meanings; there are no weak links where an-





cient historians have feared for their very lives if they should displease their kings or dictators. Moreover, the student reader doesn't even have to carry any books around. It is all compiled in one volume, ever before his eyes. One cover of this first edition is 29,006 feet above sea level at the top of Mount Everest, the other 7,600 feet down in the earth's deepest mine in Brazil. In between, with only a few places where the book cutter slipped, are the pages open to the reader wherever he is able to see the face of a mountain, the wall of a canyon, or any other exposed surface.

This volume has *Lithosphere*, the earth's crust, written across its binding. We are choosing it in preference to its two sister volumes, *Hydrosphere* and *Atmosphere*, because of its slower rate of change. The other two would be most unsatisfactory recording mediums, as is easily seen if we look up in the air and try to see where the last bird flew by. There is no evidence as to how big he was, which way he went, or anything of interest about him. The same is true of our swimming friends. However, let the bird light for food or the swimmer crawl out on the muddy shore where his mark is left and we have another record for our book, complete in every detail.

The actual reading of the records is really very simple, as a historian's work goes. There are no involved translations to interpret. A glacier passing over the Russian steppes makes the same record in the book as it does in Sunderland. A volcano in Colombia records its activity in the amount of lava and ash piled up as it does in Alaska. There are no misleading newspaper headlines to confuse the issue. The recent quake in Turkey is receiving tremendous publicity, yet the steady daily work of the Mississippi does much more to change the appearance of the earth. The pages are bound as we would expect to find them with the first on the bottom and the last on top, all in good order except where a few corners have been turned down and these are easily straightened out.

If we do not trust the printed word for our history,





then how are we going to read it? That is easy. Instead of learning many languages by studying paper and print, we learn one universal tongue by familiarizing ourselves with the materials concerned and the agents and forces that work on these materials. We are going to learn to read history much as a detective reads a case. A mangled body found by the roadside doesn't prove anything on sight. But when we analyze the victim's clothes and find paint pigment of a certain type and glass fragments of a special lens, then we have dependable facts to work from. In geology we reduce the evidence to its basic parts. In short, we must know our rocks and minerals, a task which has been more or less of a hobby with most of us who like to pick up nice shiny stones and things.

Having mastered the materials of the earth, we find that we are able to group all the forces and agents at work under two processes. These are the destructive processes and the constructive processes. The first has two agents, disintegration and decomposition. We are more familiar with these terms than you probably realize. If you carry out the simple experiment of placing a dead fish on your back porch, you may observe both agents at work. There will be either a chemical decomposition that does funny things to the atmosphere, or there will occur mechanical disintegration by the neighbor's cat. If the experiment is followed closely you will observe that the two usually work hand in hand. So are mountain ranges worn down and carried away.

The constructive processes add new material to the surface of the earth and raise up new areas for habitation. Their agents would include volcanoes, and earth movements with uplifts. This matter of uplifts isn't so complicated to understand. Just keep in mind the picture of the farmer who piled so much grain on the tailgate of his wagon that he couldn't keep the front wheels on the ground. You can't get away with moving a 10,000-foot mountain around either and not expect the same thing to happen.





Now that we have seen how our history is written and read, let us read what available notes we have on Deerfield's past. Here in Old Deerfield we are fortunate in having a large quantity of material at our command. The shapes and composition of all the land marks that are loved so well express more than mere physical beauty. They hold the complete historical record of our valley. Arthur's Seat, Pine Hill, Red Rocks, Pocumtuck Mountain, and Hosmer's Peak; they are all invaluable pages in the great volume.

Instead of baffling ourselves with the millions of years, let us divide our history into the three customary periods, ancient, medieval, and modern.

Reading from our oldest records, the hard rocks that make up Arthur's Seat and the highlands to our west, we learn that our valley's beginnings must have been under rather grim conditions. How else could such a battered remnant of some former material come to be?

Only a period of extreme unrest could account for what we find here. The prominent slaty cleavage of the rock, easily confused with the bedding planes of water-laid sediments, tells us that tremendous pressures were applied. This causes all the particles in the rock to line up with their long axes perpendicular to the direction of the applied pressure, giving the rock a parallel cleavage as in slate. To illustrate, let's pretend that we are all lying flat on the floor at various angles and a large push broom is brought into play. We would find ourselves peeling off the back wall in layers with our long axes perpendicular to the handle of the broom. As you can imagine, all this would develop a considerable amount of friction and heat as is evidenced by the fact that our rock is shot through with quartz that was introduced into cracks as a hot water solution.

Closing our ancient history, we have a very uninspiring picture of Deerfield as a badly down-warped region between two rugged highlands.

Our next, or medieval, stage of development holds

There is no doubt that the history of the United States is a story of progress. It is a story of the growth of a nation from a small colony to a great power. It is a story of the struggles and triumphs of a people who have built a great and free society. The history of the United States is a story of the growth of a nation from a small colony to a great power. It is a story of the struggles and triumphs of a people who have built a great and free society.

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material of greater interest to us. Here we find the formation of the land forms that we are more familiar with. We also see the development of fish and reptiles, our only contribution to the advance of animal life up to recent times.

We find that no sooner was this trough formed than it began to fill with material washed in from the sides. Finally the highlands were worn down and the basin was filled up until they formed a level plain on an approximate line with Arthur's Seat. This plain was raised a little and tilted slightly to the southeast, resulting in the start of several streams. Not the Connecticut as we know it now, but a series of parallel streams running directly to the sea and following this southeast slope. The West River at Brattleboro was part of the Blackstone; the Deerfield ran directly southeast and was part of the Willimansett; and the Westfield continued in a straight line via Hop Brook to the Sound. The Connecticut is a later development of the Farmington as it eroded its way northward cutting off one stream at a time until it reached its present length. Tracing the development of these streams is interesting but the importance of their work lies in the fact that they have carved into all this material so that we are now able to see just what was going on during that filling of the old trough.

Examining the material just as we see it, we find a fine shale formed from mud on the bottom; a red sandstone with a layer of lava in the middle; and a conglomerate or rock formed from cemented gravel on top. These are readily seen at Whittemore's Mills, Red Rocks, Pocumtuck Rock, and Hosmer's Peak. We also note that the finest shales and sandstones are on the western side of the valley showing that most of the material must have come from the east, as particles grade off in size as they are carried farther from their source.

There are three bits of evidence of a former existing range to our east. It must have had an altitude of some 10,000 feet and is referred to as the old New England





Alps. In the first place we can get a rough idea of the size from the amount of material that it took to fill this basin from New Haven to Bernardston to a height above that of the rock. The size and shape of the pebbles and stone in the rock tell us how far they have come. Another interesting thing is a reverse talus slope on the east side of Toby. From this we are able to estimate the slope of the great mountain as a talus slope always lies just under the angle of roll. It is composed of the sharp angular fragments that roll down the sides of mountains. In this case it is so old that it has cemented itself into a rock, but it still shows us the facts that interest us.

If such a mountain were ever there we would expect to find at least some part of its roots, and in this we are not disappointed. They are the outcroppings of coarse igneous rock that we find to the east of Toby and running south under the high-tension line. We know how deep the molten mass that formed this rock must have been buried to cool slowly enough to be coarse. Otherwise we would find a fine-grained rock as the trap rock that cooled on the surface so rapidly that no minerals had a chance to separate out.

Our Revolutionary ancestors knew about these ancient outcroppings. We may still visit their open surface mines where they dug out the mineral galena, roasted off the sulphur and had pure lead for their bullets. Long closed by our richer deposits in the west, these mines in Leverett were very valuable at the time when our forebears were limited to the eastern seaboard for the natural resources with which they had to protect and advance their position.

As this range was eroded down, the material was washed into the rocky basin forming extensive mud flats and choking what lakes and streams were present. Also climatic conditions were shifting and the region was growing more and more arid. During the early part of the period of filling we notice that fishes and reptiles were flourishing. We have a picture of lakes well stocked





with fully developed fish, not unlike our bass and sun-fish. Dinosaurs were roaming around, probably coming down from eating shrubs on the mountain sides to wander about the mud flats looking for water, or reeds to munch. Their tracks were baked out by the hot sun and dusted over. As a period of flood washed more mud out on the flats we have the original tracks preserved in both the concave and convex. These tracks are found in great numbers in the shales from Gill to Holyoke.

The fish in the meantime were finding conditions growing worse and worse. Their waters were evaporating too rapidly and mud was being washed in so fast that life was becoming most unendurable, even for a fish. They died by the score. The only fortunate part of the whole affair being that the mud was settling out so fast that they were covered over as soon as they hit the bottom. They are still there after millions of years. The richest deposits in the world are found just across the river at Whittemore's Mills, giving our neighboring town the questionable distinction of international recognition for its dead fish. Seriously, the historical value of the deposit is easily recognized.

Soon after this the region became so arid that our pleasant valley was marked as an extremely undesirable place to live. In fact the reputation was so bad that all of our forms of life are of rather recent introduction from more hospitable areas. The red color of our sandstones tell how arid things were. This color is due to an iron cement that would not form under humid conditions because it is the pure oxide, which means that the hydrous or water element has been driven off.

The filling-in process progressed at a much faster rate under these conditions. Before long so much weight had been shifted around that lines of weakness developed, resulting in various faults and fissures. These acted as outlets for the lava generated by the disturbances that were starting up volcanic activity. Times were generally hectic and account for the two flows that we are familiar





with, one capping the Holyoke Range and the other our own Pocumtuck Ridge. The neck of the volcano is just south of Mt. Holyoke but, as is the case with volcanoes, most of the lava wells out these long rift fissures in a most unspectacular manner as far as pyrotechnics are concerned. The closest example is in the opening of a warm bottle of ginger ale. As we all know, the initial blast is the most spectacular but the real trouble comes when the stuff begins to slowly well out all over the place.

Further deposition reduced the area to the plain that we have already mentioned. The angles in our beds of sandstone tell us that there was more action along the faults. There is one along the north front of the Holyoke Range, and as Pocumtuck slopes east  $23^{\circ}$  and Toby only  $5^{\circ}$ , there must be one along the course of the Connecticut.

Most of our local features are due to the streams carving into this upraised plain that we have seen formed. Arthur's Seat and the old rocks to our west were uncovered. The old basin was excavated to a level with Red Rocks, with Pocumtuck Ridge standing up as a great canyon wall. The whole place was just a sandstone waste of canyons and little bumps here and there as we see in the core of Pine Hill. This hill was formed by the Deerfield meandering around but the reason it was cut off and left is that it has a coherent sandstone core which may be seen sticking out on the west side at the north end of the hill.

Things were progressing very happily along these lines until operations were interrupted by a great ice sheet that worked down over the region. This glacier stopped all canyon cutting but did a little characteristic whittling of its own in the way of gouges, and rounding sharp points. It is the retreat of this ice that ushers in our modern era and adds the final touches to our present picture.

The glacier over Deerfield reached a thickness of some 3,000 feet. The resulting weight was enough to depress





the land 250 feet. At the end of this period of glaciation it was natural that the southern end should start melting first. Because of this the land to the south rose up again first. The result was a lake basin that lasted until all of the land had been freed of its load and had risen back far enough to dump all of the water out into the sound.

When this had been accomplished it was discovered that the old red sandstone canyons were all choked up with clay, mud, sand, and gravel which had been washed into the lake, a most discouraging sight for our rivers which had carved out such nice deep canyons in the sandstone. However, the show must go on, and there was nothing to do but get to work and clean the mess out as soon as possible. Today, after some 12,000 years of work we find the job about half done.

As the last of the lake trickled out of our valley, the Deerfield found itself faced with quite a problem. Its old channel had been buried beyond any trace, and it had choked its own mouth by playing around in the edge of the lake and building the big delta that may be seen over near Stillwater. It finally managed to cut down through this and made several futile attempts at following its old course southward. The frustrated stream worked down to about the Gables before it gave up and turned north looking for an easier way out. This it found by joining the Green and flowing out through Cheapside. Maintaining this course through modern times, it has wandered back and forth across Wapping and Deerfield finishing up all of the surface features as we see them today.

The level of the old lake bottom is easily read from the terraces on the west side of the valley, those above us here at the foot of Shack Hill, as well as the rise up to the level from Wapping to the Gables. Shack Hill has little dips in it showing where the different shore lines occurred as the level of the lake receded. Pine Hill has been carved out as one of our beauty spots with a little Oxbow Lake on the west side where the river has cut off one of its own bends.





We have still to mention the most important feature of this modern history. As we pass from the "Dark Ages" we find that a bare rock canyon country, most unliveable, has changed to a broad valley floor with a deep rich lake bottom furnishing a fertile topsoil. Seeds began to take hold. With the change to a more favorable climate trees and forests began to spring up. Best of all, animal life too discovered that, after all, New England wasn't such a tough place in which to live; they came from all directions. The good word must have been pretty wide spread because the porcupines came all the way up from South America, and if you have ever seen a porcupine walk you can appreciate what an undertaking that was.

The last arrivals were the Indians. These wandering Mongolian savages crossed over from Siberia with the retreat of the ice. Once on this side, some of their number traveled east via the system of lakes that stretch across Canada and our northern states. Reaching the eastern seaboard they turned toward the south. Here they found forests abounding in game and fertile fields on the valley floor for their corn. This was the picture that greeted our forefathers as they pioneered this Deerfield Valley.

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## A FORGOTTEN ANCESTOR

BY F. N. THOMPSON

In the murky background of Deerfield history there lurk shades who were not of Deerfield and whose surnames, if called in the Deerfield of today, would awaken no response; yet they partake of its present life through us, their descendants. One of those ancients was three times married, had thrice three children and is the ancestor of many Deerfield families; yet his own family name is no longer spoken here.





## BALDWIN

JOSEPH BALDWIN probably came to America from Cholesbury, County Bucks, England. He was in Milford, Connecticut, in 1639; removed to Hadley 1662/3; and died November 2, 1684. I do not know that any of his many children were killed or captured by the French and Indians, but the families of his three daughters who married Deerfield men were not so fortunate. Perhaps descendants of Baldwin's other children came also to Deerfield, but these I have not traced. Hannah, Mary and Martha Baldwin married Jeremiah Hull, John Catlin and John Hawks, in 1658, 1662 and 1667; and at about that period this region became "the western frontier."

## 1. HULL

HANNAH BALDWIN and her husband JEREMIAH HULL appear to have been the parents of that Jeremiah Hull who in 1688 married Mehitable Smead, and dying in 1691 left two young children, Elizabeth and Jeremiah 3rd. This boy perished in 1693/4 when the home of his stepfather (Godfrey Nims) was burned. The daughter and her mother were captured in 1704 and the mother was slain on the march toward Canada. Elizabeth Hull was redeemed and in 1707 was married by Parson Williams to John Nims, who had been captured in 1703 and escaped in 1705. They dwelt in the house still standing on "the town street" of Old Deerfield, and their gravestones are in the burial place of the forefathers.

## 2. CATLIN

MARY BALDWIN, her husband JOHN CATLIN and their family, suffered greatly at the Deerfield Massacre. He was killed and, though her life was spared because of her kindness to a French soldier, she died a few weeks later—on April 9, 1704. Three of their daughters, like the earlier generation, married Deerfield men:





Thomas French, James Corse and Ebenezer Smead. I will speak in a moment of the fate of these French, Corse and Smead families in 1704. Another daughter, Ruth, was captured and after three years in Canada returned to Deerfield. The son Jonathan was slain. A son, Joseph Catlin, had married Hannah, daughter of Ensign John Sheldon. This Joseph was "one of the seven brave men who defended the Benoni Stebbins house 1704, and one of the nine who fell in the Meadow fight." Hannah Sheldon Catlin, in the Stebbins house with her husband, was wounded during the attack. Their son John—captured in 1704 and returned in 1706—married in 1715 Mary, daughter of Benjamin and Thankful Nims Munn, and their sons founded the Joseph, Seth and Oliver Catlin families. John's Uncle John, another son of Mary Baldwin Catlin, married a sister of that Edward Allen who was killed at The Bars in 1746—dying that his children might escape by flight. I return to the record of the three Catlin daughters; grandchildren of Joseph Baldwin.

#### 2-A. FRENCH

Mary Catlin, wife of the first Thomas French, was captured in 1704 and (like her Cousin Mehitable) killed on the march. One of their children was slain and five were captured. Of these captives two were probably brought back by Ensign Sheldon, father of their Aunt Hannah Catlin. Thomas French was captured and returned.

#### 2-B. CORSE

Elizabeth Catlin, wife of the first James Corse, was also captured and slain on the northward march. Their daughter of the same name was captured and never returned, though her brother James Corse, Jr. (whose wife was another daughter of Benjamin and Thankful Nims Munn), armed with a passport from Governor Dummer, made a journey to Canada in search of her.





## 2-C. SMEAD

Esther Catlin married the first Ebenezer Smead, and their daughters married men named Arms, Wells, Graves, Martindale and Nims. Sons found wives in the Barnard, Nims and Field families. Thus was the Baldwin blood widely spread among the old families of Deerfield.

## 3. HAWKS

MARTHA BALDWIN and her husband JOHN HAWKS had one son, John. This grandson of Joseph Baldwin married in 1695 Thankful Smead of Deerfield, sister of the Mehitable and Ebenezer named above. The three were children of William Smead, and of his wife Elizabeth Lawrence who also perished in 1704 with the wife and children of her son Samuel Smead. John and Thankful Smead Hawks and their three children (and John's half-sister Elizabeth) were all slain during the massacre.

## THE SLAIN

So among the Deerfield martyrs were a son-in-law (John Catlin) of the forgotten immigrant, Baldwin; two granddaughters (Mary Catlin French and Elizabeth Catlin Corse); three grandsons (Joseph and Jonathan Catlin and John Hawks, Jr.); the wives of two grandsons (Mehitable Smead Hull-Nims and Thankful Smead Hawks); and four great-grandchildren (the babe John French, John Hawks, aged eight, and his younger sisters Martha and Thankful): *twelve* slain in the massacre.

## CAPTIVES

Among the captives who were not slain were *eleven* of this family: two grandchildren (Ruth and John Catlin); the husband of a granddaughter (Thomas French); seven great-grandchildren (Elizabeth Hull Nims, Mary, Thomas, Freedom, Martha and Abigail French, seven-





teen to six years old, and Elizabeth Corse aged eight), of whom but three returned to their homes; and the husband (John Nims) of a great-granddaughter.

#### BALDWIN BLOOD

I have made this brief compilation so that we may remember for a moment the name of one whose descendants, bearing other names than his, fought in the early days for the preservation of the little plantation on the Deerfield frontier, were driven captive over the long cold trail to Canada 236 years ago, or died for the soil we love and the homes we cherish. I speak the forgotten name because in our own veins, and in the veins of those whose familiar names are often upon our lips, there flows the blood of JOSEPH BALDWIN.

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### THE OLD WORLD PASTURE

BY JONATHAN PORTER ASHLEY

To those of us who have had the privilege—rare in these modern, exciting days—of studying the Latin poets at the feet of a great teacher, the lovely lyrics and stately strains of Horace and Catullus are indeed an inspiration. In the fall of 1908 I, together with a motley crowd of robust youths seeking not so much an education as an easy step toward a diploma, elected to take the course in Sophomore Latin under the benign guidance of Prof. William L. Cowles at the nearby college of Amherst. Strange to say, it was an easy course and, *mirabile dictu*, we learned to like Latin. If you were to ask that same group of men today what course they enjoyed most at Amherst, the answer would invariably be: "Sophomore Latin under Billie Cowles."

Two of the Professor's favorite sonnets of Catullus, which I have always enjoyed, were "At his Brother's Grave," and the "Happy Return to Sirmio." Tennyson





has combined the ideas of these two bits of verse in the beautiful and familiar poem, "Frater Ave Atque Vale."

"Row us out from Desenzano, to your Sirmione row!  
So they row'd, and there we landed—'O ventusa Sirmio!'

There to me thro' all the groves of olive in the summer glow,

There beneath the Roman ruin where the purple flowers grow,

Came that 'Ave atque Vale' of the Poet's hopeless woe,

Tenderest of Roman poets nineteen hundred years ago,

'Frater Ave atque Vale'—as we wander'd to and fro  
Gazing at the Lydian laughter of the Garda Lake below

Sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio!"

Now what, you may ask, has all this to do with the Old World pasture! Patience, gentle reader, and soon you will learn. I do not know when or why this particular section of Deerfield was called "The Old World." Mr. Sheldon, in his *History of Deerfield*, mentions the Old World as a part of "Wisdom," now known as West Deerfield. No date is given, but I assume that the name came into use soon after 1700. The quiet and the solitude of the region so far removed from the rest of the "New World" civilization is a possible explanation. In my grandfather's day it was also known as the "West Pasture."

One does not need to row a boat to arrive at the Old World, as Catullus did to reach Sirmio. However, despite the bridges across the Deerfield River at Cheapside and Stillwater, the journey is fully as arduous and difficult. A few years ago I went there by automobile with our genial Selectman, George Fuller, and Mr. Cyril Raymond, the State Engineer in charge of small town roads. We were measuring the distance from the main





road to the pasture. Turning off the upper West Deerfield road, we entered what seemed to be an abandoned wood road on which we were soon busy dodging boulders and trees which stood sometimes outside, and sometimes between the ruts we were trying to follow. The car leapt merrily from ledge to ledge; we forded a babbling brook, and climbed a hill literally steeper than the roof of a house. Finally we reached our destination, a mile and a half from West Deerfield. As we disembarked and began to take stock of the sundry bumps and bruises which we had acquired on our perilous trip, I casually asked our Engineer, "Cy, have you ever driven a car over this road before?" "No," promptly replied Mr. Raymond, "and I hope that I never have to do it again!" The road has been repaired somewhat since that time, but there is still room for improvement. If one values his car at all, I would advise him to stop where he can turn around in safety, and to continue his way on foot.

The town road ends at the barway of the Ashley pasture, but I have more than a suspicion that it was, in former days, an old stage road to Shelburne and the west. The topography of the country seems to indicate that such might have been the case, and an unused barway at the top of the hill would appear to serve such a purpose very well. Perhaps it was a continuation of the old Albany Road which starts at the Old Deerfield common, although Judge Thompson probably would not agree with me in this assumption.\*

There are no Roman ruins in our Old World; but near the brook at the bottom of the little valley, there is an abandoned cellar hole surrounded by several old apple trees which must have been planted by man. Along the stone wall there is a patch of rhubarb, and some pretty rose bushes, which compare very favorably with the purple flowers of the poet. Mr. Sheldon states that Cyrus Brown, ancestor of our late beloved and respected citizen of the same name, once lived there. As the pasture

\* Good guess; but, by request, I delete nothing. Editor.





has belonged to the Ashley family since 1773, I do not see how anyone else came to build there; nor can I see how he made a living. And yet the cellar hole, rhubarb, roses, and apple trees bespeak of human habitation.

One of the most useful appurtenances to a pasture is a fence, although feed, shade and water are equally necessary. Our ancestors built well when they erected the rude stone walls which run up and down our hills and vales, straight on the compass, and many of them useful today. My admiration goes out to those early pioneers who, with back-breaking toil, gathered the loose rocks and stones on the line to form a fence which no cattle crossed. O pioneers, I salute you: *Ave atque Vale!* Robert Frost knew whereof he wrote in "Mending Wall" when he says, "Good fences make good neighbors!" No truer words were ever spoken. I can well imagine those busy days on the hillside when, with oxen and stoneboat, the rocks were gathered from far and near. The large ones, pried from their resting places, were laid at the bottom of the wall, while the smaller ones, balanced and chinked up with broken pieces, were placed on top in the hope that neither frost nor man would throw them down. Today, barbed or woven wire has replaced the rail fences and stone walls our ancestors built. But the stones remain and the line runs true, although the sturdy race of men who laid them has long gone to its last reward to where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the blessed sleep in peace." Hail and farewell!

"Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;  
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile  
The short and simple annals of the poor."

On April 20, 1773, my illustrious ancestor, Rev. Jonathan Ashley, bought of Ebenezer and Abner Arms, yeomen, for £35, Lot No. 4 in the south half of Deerfield, northwest division, containing 104 acres, bounded on the east by the Seven Mile Line (so called). So says the





deed which is before me, and which is dated in the "Thirteenth year of his Majesty's Reign." Nevertheless, I have a faint recollection of reading in the *Proprietors Records* or elsewhere that this land was given to Mr. Ashley as the minister's share when that part of the township was originally divided up. At some time in the distant past, my ancestors divided the pasture by a stone wall through the center running north and south. This was to keep the cows on one side and the young stock on the other. I have always thought that this was labor wasted, as the fence was never kept up in my time, if ever. In the eastern part rises Arthur's Seat, 1000 feet high, the greatest elevation in Deerfield. Mr. Sheldon writes that "this point is not difficult of access, and the view from it is extensive and grand." I was once told that it was named for Arthur Hoyt who, while recovering from a severe illness, was wont to sojourn there and commune with nature. From this elevation one can look over Pocumtuck to Mt. Toby and the Pelham hills on the east. Mt. Tom and the Holyoke Range are visible on the south, as is the Connecticut River. To the north Monadnock raises its stately crown, and westerly the Berkshires rise step on step to the summit of Greylock. It is one of the best views that I know of anywhere.

One of the earliest spring tasks is to repair the fences. We no longer "mend wall"; we "fix fence." Usually, half the small tools on the farm are loaded into a one-horse wagon, and we start for the pasture. Arriving there, Old Bess is tied to a convenient tree to wait for noon, and the tools are apportioned according to the size and strength of the workers. Shovel, ax, crowbar, wire puller and stretcher, hammer, and an assortment of spikes, nails, and staples complete our equipment. A Swiss mountain climber has a light load and an easy job compared to that of one who would fix fence in the Old World. Often the stoutest member of the party carries a 90 lb. reel of barbed wire on his shoulder. This task proves irksome when the barbs pry through shirt and





jumper, and reach the tender flesh. We proceed up the hill, stopping here and there for necessary repairs. A wire is broken; a post rotted off; a few stones must be relaid. Sometimes a long rail is cut to lay on top of the wall more as a camouflage than for actual value. Did you ever try to dig a posthole with shovel and bar in a broken ledge of rock? The labor is invigorating, to say the least. Usually, when the pasture is bordered by a wood, the fences are not too well kept up. Trees, which serve as fence posts, are likely to fall over, and there is little feed there, anyway. Until a new fence is absolutely necessary, we often cut some brush and string it along in an artistic manner, with a prayer that no inquisitive heifer will poke through, as often happens, to see what lies beyond. This latter occurrence is not an unusual one in haying season or almost anytime when we are very busy. Well known is that annoyance when we are informed by a neighbor that "your cattle are out; come over and get them back right away." And it must be done, too.

When pastures lie side by side, it is customary to divide the length of the fence for upkeep. Then, when the cattle do get out, you have the satisfaction of pointing to the hole in your neighbor's section and of asking him what he had been doing all spring. Sometimes we fix the fence together, and a field day is had. A jug of cider is brought along to keep up our courage. There is nothing so refreshing on a hot day in the pasture or in the hay field as a sip of good, cold cider at noontime. Not only does the food taste better but also the tongue loosens to promote better feeling between neighbor and neighbor. But have a care—don't drink too much of it, else you may spend the rest of the day asleep under a tree. Your colleagues will wake you up in time to go home for chores. I know whereof I speak. But at that, I would not swap a jug of good New England cider for all of the old Falernian wine about which Q. Horatius Flaccus sings so joyously.

After the fence is fixed the cattle are turned out to





pasture. That is another story which time prohibits my enlarging upon here. Suffice it to say, the well-kept lawns and gardens of Old Deerfield are certain to suffer when I turn loose a herd of excited cows and yearlings which has been penned up in the barn all winter. I have solved the problem in part by engaging two husky boys to ride their bicycles along the sidewalks to keep the livestock as near the middle of the road as possible. When Stillwater Bridge is reached, the cattle are quite docile and, if the day is hot, much urging is needed to complete their forward progress to the pasture. We usually turn out about the 10th of May, especially when it is near a Saturday, when the youth of America is not in school, and each can help to the extent of his ability. It is not advisable to turn out the cattle too early as the young stock especially are likely to eat the poisonous leaves of the laurel if the grass is too short. My great-uncle John had an infallible remedy for this difficulty. When sick calves in the pasture were reported, he started for pasture with a basket of eggs. Breaking one in the mouth of each sick creature, he made it swallow the egg, shell and all. This proved to be a successful antidote, and conditions were soon reported as normal. We brought the cattle home around Nov. 10, or sooner, if snow came. There is not much profit in leaving cattle in pasture after the grass has ceased to grow.

Why do people like to visit the Old World Pasture? There are several reasons which appeal to me. The careful husbandman makes a weekly trip, usually on Sunday, to salt the cattle and to take an inventory, seeing to it that none are "over, short or damaged," as they say in railroad parlance. Cattle like salt, and soon learn to come when the farmer raises the call of "Come, boss," in stentorian tones that reecho from woods and rocks. An answering bellow is heard from the mountain top and soon the herd comes into view, the yearlings in the lead, rushing madly, down the steep hillside, or following more carefully along the many cowpaths made by the beasts





themselves. An anxious mother will stop and call softly to a week-old baby, all legs, and half-hidden in the brush, fearful of its first sight of man, its master. After they are counted, the forward springers are inspected for signs of an early freshening. A swelling udder means that the cow should be taken home where such veterinary knowledge as may be available is often useful during the process of calving. No good farmer will allow his cows to calve in pasture, if he can help it. On the other hand, a dry cow can be taken to pasture at any time during the summer, and left to shift for herself until fall, provided there is enough feed and water for her maintenance.

Hunters often come to the Old World. The hills and valleys are said to teem with deer, foxes, and rabbits. Somehow I rather doubt this claim. There are plenty of squirrels, red and gray, and an occasional woodchuck pokes his head from his shallow burrow. Now and then a good string of trout is caught in the dark recesses of a woodland stream, but most bits of running water in this region can hardly be dignified by the name of stream—a brook is the better description, and lucky is he whose pasture is well-watered through a long, hot summer. I am no hunter, except for an occasional search for a missing yearling or a new-born calf. One spring I found the bones of a two-year old steer, lost from the herd the fall before, caught in a wire snare set by some miscreant in search of deer. And as for fishing, the last time I indulged in that pastime was many years ago, when two of us pulled our companion from a hole in the ice on Broughton's Pond. We on the farm usually get enough exercise without tramping the woods with rod and gun, or matching our skill with that of others on the golf links.

To an artist the Old World is a paradise. Although there are no olive groves and the Garda Lake with its Lydian laughter as in "sweet Catullus's all-but-island, olive-silvery Sirmio," the silver birches stand out clearly against the darker background of the maples and oaks.





In the spring the pink and white blossoms of the apple trees contrast sharply with the dark green of the hillside, while the dull gray rocks form a picture which must be seen to be appreciated. A few ancient, weather-beaten pines and oaks spring from the ledges; their branches gnarled and broken from the storms and frosts of centuries. Most of the stately, spreading chestnuts have succumbed to the ravages of the blight; here and there one stands stripped and dead, to remind us of its former glory. A little brook, starting from nowhere under the shadow of Arthur's Seat, tumbles softly down the verdant slope, dropping gently over the ledges to disappear in the woods only to emerge at the bottom of the valley to offer refreshment for man and beast. The *chiaroscuro* of the woods and hills as the shadows deepen and the white clouds sail across the deep, blue sky, has often been painted with beautiful effect, while the *genre* atmosphere of the humble kine, as they stand quietly grazing or just lying there chewing their cuds, would delight the soul of Rosa Bonheur or Paul Potter.

The geologist is right at home in the Old World. The late Professor Benjamin K. Emerson of Amherst College—"good old Emmie" to those of us whom he once led hither and yon in search of knowledge—once wrote a ponderous monograph on the "Geology of Old Hampshire County." Some of this is interesting reading, but much of it is too erudite for the layman. The professor states that these western hills of which Arthur's Seat is a part, are made of Silurian mica schist. That indicates that they are very, very old, and were formerly much higher. The ledges are a beautiful example of metamorphic rock, originally laid down by the action of water and then fused and twisted by heat and pressure into their present formation. Small veins of pure white quartz stand out, and tiny flakes of mica glisten in the sun. Where iron particles have filtered in, an outcrop of rose quartz is seen. Garnets abound here and there, easily extracted from the rock with the point of a penknife. On





top of the hill is a large granite boulder which I like to think was brought down from far away Labrador by the mighty glaciers which once covered this region a mile deep with crushing, grinding ice, and whose retreat left our hills covered with loose stones of all kinds and sizes wherewith to build our stone walls.

These hills were old when the dinosaurs wallowed in the marshes that bordered the estuary which has since become the Connecticut Valley. They saw the cracks open up through which the lava flowed, covering the sandstone; later, they witnessed the mighty cataclysm which hurled the strata upward and tilted it to the east. The Holyoke range was thrown across the arm of the sea extending northward from Long Island Sound, and this damming up of the waters formed the prehistoric Deerfield Lake, whose bottom now forms the fertile fields of the middle Connecticut Valley. The ancient delta of the Deerfield River can plainly be seen jutting into the fields of West Deerfield. It is now an excellent gravel bank, which furnishes the material with which to improve the roads of the town. I like to stand on the summit of Arthur's Seat and gaze eastward over this old lake site to the sharp escarpment of Pocumtuck, left tilted by the force of nature with the basalt overlying the sandstone. The quiet little village, with its church spire rising above the surrounding trees, seems very much in keeping with the whole picture. Beyond Pocumtuck lie Mt. Toby, and the granite of the Pelham hills, considered by some as a part of the Laurentian plateau, the oldest land known in America, which rose from the vast deep "when chaos was, and night."

Here, then, are several reasons to account for the appeal of the Old World Pasture; thrice blessed is the philosopher who experiences all of them. I have always thought that man arrives in this world with an inborn sense of appreciation of all that is good and beautiful in life. Often he needs only to be told in order to realize the beauty that is round about him. Education does not con-





sist of years spent in school and college. It is more a realization that outside the realm of business and of earning a living, there is a world to be discovered which will make life more worth-while and more interesting. The mind of the farmer, the business man, or the teacher will grow small if he thinks only of the chores and routine of his daily life. Come with me to the Old World Pasture and see it through the eyes of the husbandman, the artist, the geologist and the philosopher! Then we can say with Catullus, "how willingly, how joyfully do I revisit thee, scarcely believing that I have left Thyni and the Bithynian plains, and behold thee in safety!"

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## ODDITIES IN LOCAL PLACE-NAMES

BY LUCY CUTLER KELLOGG

There is much within easy grasp for minds to know, and much of this knowledge is brought to light at these annual meetings.

There is a certain fascination in the study of origins, and when we hear of a place or section bearing a name to us curious or unusual, we immediately begin to question, Why? To some extent this paper will furnish an answer as to such names occurring in our Franklin County towns: it does not claim to include them all.

Beginning with the name "Ashfield"—itself not peculiar, but bestowed in a seemingly irregular manner. When the people of Huntstown petitioned for incorporation in 1765, the space for the name of the town, was, in the petition, left blank. Sir Francis Bernard was then Governor of the Colony of Massachusetts and he seems to have had a fondness for giving town names, as it is said he did in twenty-eight cases.

At this time, says the Ashfield history, Lord Thurlow of the parish of Ashfield, England, was very prominent there and in hearty sympathy with Governor Ber-





nard in his feeling toward the colonies; so the latter, with his penchant for naming towns and with the opportunity given him at the last stage of the bill, doubtless filled the blank space with the name Ashfield in honor of his English friend. At the time of the Ashfield Centennial observance in 1865, the statement was made that this was the only town in the world bearing that name.\*

Within the limits of Ashfield there are names attracting attention. Many of the settlers coming from the Cape Cod region and several of the families settling near each other, the highway passing by their homes soon became known as "Cape Street," and so it has always remained. "Little Switzerland" is a name of more recent origin, given in recognition of the beauty of that section, as travellers felt that it compared favorably with the older Switzerland of Europe.

Of "Peter Hill" it is told that one Peter Wells, or Peter "Guinea," born in Guinea, Africa, and taken by a slave trader when about seven years old, was held a slave in Connecticut and belonged to the father of Dr. Phineas Bartlett, the first physician in Ashfield. He married "Sue." At that time slaves were uncertain property. Peter asked Sue's master what he would take for her, and received this reply: "You can take her and pay me what you have a mind to; something to answer the law." So Peter took her and paid two coppers. In a short time they ran away and followed Dr. Bartlett to Ashfield, living there in a cabin. Sue was a good cook and a great scold. She would say of Peter, "Poor cretur, without a head." When soundly berated, Peter would sometimes retaliate, saying, "I didn't give but two coppers for ye, and ye ain't worth that." Peter tilled the lot on the hill which afterwards bore his name, and lived a simple, honest life. When he became old and a town charge he was taken care of for a number of years by a Mr. Stocking, who took his hill lot in payment. This lot being sold

\* Ashfield, Montana, and Ashfield, Australia.





later, the purchaser called it his "Peter," hence "Peter Hill" perpetuates the name of an humble man.

"Apple Valley" was the name given that section by Jonathan Johnson, an early and active member of this association.

The large area known as "Steady Lane" is claimed to have been so called because some of the inhabitants used to meet so steadily to play cards at Capt. Warner's store. Should all steady card players at the present, have such a name bestowed on the scene of their activities, Steady Lane would be a common, rather than an unusual, designation.

While the substance of the above recital is largely drawn from the Ashfield history, there is one name applied to South Ashfield, of which no printed record can be found. That name is "Tinpot." After searching some years for its origin, application to the town clerk, Mr. Whitney, brought information as follows:

"There seem to be many stories as to the origin of the name 'Tinpot.' Two are:

"Many years ago there was a store near where the present store stands which served as the starting point for many of the old tin peddlers' carts, hence 'Tinpot.' Some versions of this story add 'that the store, as a sign of its business, had a large tin pot hanging over the steps,' so 'Tinpot.'"

Another story of an entirely different character relates that many years ago one particularly rough section of Boston was called Tinpot. One night a travelling salesman from Boston was stopping at the Ashfield Hotel. During the evening a man living in South Ashfield came in and in time became so abusive to the guests that finally the travelling man remarked to him—"You had better go home to Tinpot." The name Tinpot struck the fancy of the natives present and they immediately started calling South Ashfield, Tinpot.

A third account is that the name started as a slur on





the old crockery business located in South Ashfield many years ago. A former Ashfield resident, now living at Turners Falls, tells me that near the store, there was a tinshop where all kinds of tinware was made, and this fact led to the adoption of the name. He also adds that this was the version given by the late G. Stanley Hall. Any one is at liberty to accept or reject these tales at will, but they are what is to be found on the subject.

Now passing over into Buckland we find another "Apple Valley," where, as in Ashfield, the fine fruit there raised suggested the name.

In the earlier days of this town's history, the minister was going horseback—it was before the days of carriages—over into the east part of the town to make a pastoral call. Passing through the hollow near where is now the cemetery, a hog ran out from the bushes, frightening his horse, and he was almost thrown off. In telling of the event the reverend gentleman spoke of the place as "Hog Hollow" and to this day that name has remained, although recently some are terming the place, "Happy Valley," but with no definite reason given for the change. It is said that at one time the Shakers held their meetings in this vicinity.

"Clock Hollow," near the center of the town, acquired its name because clocks were there made; first by Hubbard and Hitchcock, and later by William Sherwin.

The not particularly pleasing name of "Gruntville" is a section of Buckland Lower Street and derived its name from the peculiar habit of an old resident, of grunting whenever he spoke.

"Koon Chaug," the name of an elevation of some 1400 feet west of Buckland Center, is an Indian name meaning "Snow Hill." Its applicability is shown by the fact that in 1877, snow was there found in June in sufficient quantity to enable the people of the town to hold a public sugar eat.

In Colrain are found the names of Catamount and Christian Hill. These names seem to apply more par-





ticularly to ranges of hills than to distinct elevations. On the first named, on or near the old road over the mountain, is a large den supposed to have been formerly the lair of catamounts. Why "Christian Hill" is undetermined. The first flag flown from a public school house was at Catamount in 1812 and a marker now identifies the spot.

In Conway is found "Pumpkin Hollow" where for some years after the town's first settlement was located the chief village. Years ago an effort was made by those who thought the name "unpoetical" to rid the section of its local appellation, and at a "Christening party held by the residents the village received the name 'Church Green,' but modern innovation proved unequal to the task of beating down tradition and thus the older name continued to assert itself." Just what happened to the pumpkins to cause them to once roll from the cultivated slopes down into the hollow and give it the name, the chronicler failed to say; but to such local happenings do the quaint and curiosity-exciting names owe their origin.

It takes no great stretch of imagination to consider the insects responsible in some way for the name "Cricket Hill"; but who would conjecture that the annoyance caused by those insects to early hunters, camping there for the night, would be such a greatly contributing factor as to give the name?

Necessity is the mother of invention, so 'tis said, and William Warren for several years used to get very hungry, before winter, for fresh meat. Now this happened before the days of the broom corn industry, so he devised a broom, made of walnut, which he called his "walnut broom." These he took to Deerfield, where he had no difficulty in exchanging a broom for a pound and a half of pork. Thereupon the region in which he lived was promptly dubbed "Broomshire." In connection with this story it is also told that Warren used to walk from his home in Conway to Deerfield to get a horse and "pung"





to carry his brooms to market, and after delivering them, walked home.

The name "Hardscrabble" sets forth the fact that it took hard scrabbling to make a living on the soil of that section.

Concerning "Shirkshire" there is told this tale in the words of one Captain Childs:

"Old Mr. Sherman happened along as the people were working on the roads and at their request, assisted them a number of hours, hoping thereby to earn and get his dinner. But no one seemed willing (as the service rendered was for the public) to bear the burden alone, they all *shirked* and left him to *shirk* for himself as best he could. Highly indignant at the neglect with which he was treated he left the place in a state of excitement saying, 'Let it be called *Shirkshire* from this day forward' and so it has been and ever will be as long as wood grows and water runs."

It seems almost like "carrying coals to Newcastle" to speak to a Deerfield audience on Deerfield names, but three there are which appear to have proved baffling. Perhaps someone present can explain the origin of the name "Arthur's Seat" located in the northwest corner of the town next the Shelburne line in so-called Wisdom? Or "Behind Noon" applied to the region near the present Kells farm, now in Greenfield, where on January 15, 1800, Jonathan Hoyt sold two lots of land, each containing one and one half acres "in our new city (alias) Behind Noon." And what about "Old World?" Mr. Sheldon refers to these locations but gives no information as to the origin of their names.

About the "Turnip Yard" he has this to say: In Dec., 1753, the town sequestered property about the Sugar Loaf range for a town sheep pasture, choosing a shepherd to have charge of the flock, who was to be paid by the sheep owners, pro rata. According to an old English custom a turnip yard was laid out in connection with this, hence the name.





Of Wisdom it is said that soon after 1800, but before 1820, the Wise family were large property owners there. Now the syllable *Dom* used as a termination, signifies "jurisdiction," or, "property and jurisdiction," so *Wisedom*, which by contraction soon became Wisdom, was not inappropriate as applied to lands owned by the Wise family. This may have been gradually extended to take in adjacent holdings, for it now includes all the section between the Deerfield river and the Shelburne line. When a young man the late Judge Francis M. Thompson taught school in Wisdom, and when he became selectman in Greenfield he gave the name "Wisdom Way" to the road leading thence to Greenfield.

Hawley claims a "Forge Hill" and "Pudding Hollow." There was a rich deposit of iron ore in a hill west of the center of the place. This about 1800 was mined to supply a furnace nearby, thus giving the name "Forge Hill" to the locality. Anent Pudding Hollow there is this: In the early days there was a strife or dare, between two of the good women of the town as to who could make the largest hasty pudding. One succeeded in producing a kettle which contained five pails full, thereby becoming known as the "Pudding Head" of Hawley. The locality in which she lived, near the north part of the place, has ever since been known as Pudding Hollow.

Mr. Herbert C. Parsons gives us the reason for "The Kingdom" or "Satan's Kingdom" in Northfield being so called.

The tradition was that some wag coming out of church, after hearing a sermon in which all the fires of hell were depicted, and seeing a forest fire across the Connecticut, observed that "Satan's Kingdom was burning." About the year 1818 there was a petition for the separation of the present West Northfield from the parent town. This petition did not propose a name for the new town and was refused eventually by the legislature. Mr. Parsons, with characteristic humour, remarks that thus "Massachusetts was possibly saved a town by the





majestic name of Kingdom,” and then he adds “There was no malice in the name, the west side being populated by families held in the highest respect.” He does not mention “Hell’s Kitchen” by which name a tract south of the Kingdom is known. This area is reached by taking the road to the northwest, skirting the north side of the so-called Nelson Pond in the vicinity to the north of Mt. Hermon. The road soon turns to the north and originally extended through a valley—“Hell’s Kitchen” into Vernon. Now it is discontinued the upper part of the way.

Inquiry has brought to light this tale from a Northfield woman, born and living formerly in that section. She says: “The minister was always preaching *hell fire*”—evidently the same minister responsible for the naming of the Kingdom. “Later a fire started in a kitchen in that locality and people called it ‘Hell’s Kitchen.’ ”

My informant—one interested and posted in Northfield History—writes: “Our old town has many little settlements with purely local names. ‘Happy Hollow,’ a nice little village on the Warwick road, with a large factory where wooden pails were manufactured. ‘Pilfershire’ (you can guess what that name implies) is that section now known as East Northfield \*\*\*\*\* East of the village near Warwick is a tract of land with many cellar holes, which is known as the ‘Deserted Village.’ ” These last, being purely local, one does not hear of, as of Kingdom and Hell’s Kitchen; nevertheless if not recorded somewhere, they will soon entirely disappear.

Of the “Patten” district in Shelburne, there seem to be two accounts: The one most generally accepted is that the name was bestowed in recognition of the sterling qualities of the residents, their lives being considered a worthy example for others, hence a pattern. By reason of careless speech perhaps, this soon became Patten.\*

The other, that the custom of the pioneer women there

\* The editor has heard the name traced to a fine, or pattern, school in that district.





of wearing a patten was responsible. The patten was a wooden shoe with an iron ring worn under the soles by women as a protection against dampness.

Whately contributes some. "Old Fields," so called, is a piece of fairly level ground; evidently cultivated by the Indians, as many Indian relics have been found there, and they were old, cultivated fields when the town was first settled.

"Mount Esther" or, as it is generally known, Easter is the name applied to a range of hills. The name came from a woman called Easter, a colloquialism for her real name of Esther, who had thereon a sugar camp and dairy. It is said that this hill has always been a famous place for sugar making and grazing. Hopewell, Canterbury, Claverack, Dead Meadow and Old Boy Hills are more or less elusive. Egypt is that section whereon there was for many years a heavy growth of hemlock and pine trees growing both sides of the highway. The overhanging branches, shut out the light, so that at night it was as dark as Egypt.

Christian Lane became so called, it is presumed, because the earliest settler was a staunch old deacon of the old school Christian type whose mouth was always giving pious exhortations even while he dealt out liquor by the jugful, or concocted the beverage of the times, "Philipp," to his ungodly customers. So says Mr. Crafts, Whately's historian.

Greenfield makes it contribution in several instances. There is "Cherry Rum Brook," draining the swamp and thus having its water colored to the hue of the cherry-  
rum of yore. It crosses the Bernardston road a short distance above Silver Street.

Still further north opposite the Tourists' Camp site used to stand, as long ago as I can remember, a small, nearly square unpainted school house, known as Log Plain school house. All that flat about the original location has always been known as "Log Plain," as one hundred or more years ago it was covered with very large





pinces and the great logs cut from them. The huge stumps were used within my memory for making many of the fences thereabouts.

"Lamp Black Road" is applied to the old road running from Greenfield over Half Way Hill to Bernardston and Northfield, and known by the Bernardston people as the "back road to Greenfield." Formerly at the Griswold farm, located thereon, great quantities of lampblack were made, hence the designation.

In the early days of Turners Falls, not far from 1870, there were many French people from Canada who came to work in the newly established paper mills. Many of them settled together on the hill west of the Connecticut, which fact is responsible for the naming of "Canada Hill."

The late Judge Francis M. Thompson tells us that in that section of the Upper Meadows where is the Gerrett farm, is located what was formerly known as "Flanders," so called because at one time it contained the residence of a man who was more profane "than the army in Flanders," while a little to the northeast opposite the old William Smead place, now burned, were "Irish Plains," for many years famous as the muster ground for the militia. He adds this interesting bit of information: "It was the plain over which Benjamin Hastings and young John Graves fled when attacked by Indians at Country Farms. Hastings declared that it was covered by sweet fern waist high, but that he went over the whole of it."

In 1673, when the General Court made to Pocumtuck (Deerfield) an additional grant of seven miles square, which, says Thompson, "The liberal surveyors made to include Greenfield and Gill territory," among the restrictions was that "a farme of 250 acres be laid out for the Country's use." So a strip eighteen and a half rods wide was set off, stretching from the Connecticut river to the seven mile line, across the north part of the seven miles square, and called the Country Farm. But the name was later applied only to that locality known for





many years as the Country Farms School District, and now the school district there has been discontinued.

In 1812, when the county jail was situated just below the old Union House, south of the R.R. underpass, that area was known as "Charlestown." As the land was then Deerfield territory, it might have well been included under Deerfield names, as could also Cheapside,—so called because the land lying so far out from the center of the parent town was of less value,—likewise Petty's Plain so known since 1714 and named for a former nonresident owner Joseph Petty. This Joseph Petty had an eventful life being taken prisoner at the sack of Deerfield in 1704 and carried to Canada. An interesting letter detailing his escape is in the keeping of this association and is reproduced in Thompson's "History of Greenfield."

On this old Petty's Plain tract is found our present Meridian street, the origin of which name is occasionally the subject of speculation. One has to go no further than the county commissioner's records at the court-house in Greenfield to find the answer.

In May, 1870, the Legislature passed a law requiring stones to be placed for the use of surveyors whereby they were enabled to test their compasses for the magnetic variation of the needle; and the Franklin County Commissioners decided to place a Meridian line on land on Petty's Plain, then owned by George W. Potter. This line was located on Latitude  $42^{\circ}, 34'$ ; Longitude,  $72^{\circ}, 37'$ . Three stones were set in June, 1871, and the full account of cutting, dimensions, placing of copper plates on them, setting and the obtaining of the range by Meridian transits of the sun and the star Arcturus, the furnishing of two tripod sights, the findings as to the variation of the needle, and the other fourteen places in Massachusetts where such Meridian stones were set, is all embodied in the report of Edward Prevere, Commissioner, and makes interesting reading. Anyone curious to find these stones may easily locate them near the south end of





Meridian street, east side, back from the street, but easily visible when the grass is not too high. Surveyors are supposed to set their instruments by them annually and record their findings at the court-house. The streams of the county bear many quaint and interesting names, but they cannot be here included.

We must remember that when many of these names were given the country was in a more or less unsettled condition and that the people who gave them were inclined to rough jokes and what we might now consider uncouth mannerisms; but there was a certain applicability that caused the names to become permanent. They have always been provocative of curiosity in the present generation, and this collection of old time tales, supplemented somewhat by present day research, has been an effort to gather these explanations so that they might be more easily available to those who might not otherwise know where to look for them.

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## CENTURY-OLD BIRTH CONTROL

### FROM OUR COUNTY

Curiously enough, this region in which were a century ago the homes of big families of English ancestry was during the same period the dwelling place of a man whose writings had a "revolutionary influence on the English birth rate." The book "The Fruits of Philosophy," by the first American physician to write a treatise exclusively devoted to birth control, was published anonymously in New York in 1832; but the second edition, published in Boston the following year, bore the name of its author, Dr. Charles Knowlton.

"Dr. Charles Knowlton was born in 1800 at Templeton, Mass., married in 1821 and graduated at Hanover Medical College in 1824. He began practice in Hawley at 'Poverty Square,' then a thriving village, and moved





to Ashfield in the early thirties. He was a 'free thinker' and was outspoken against the stern theology of the day. He was esteemed a skillful physician and had a very large practice": so says the "History of Ashfield."

Keeping many English names out of "Who's Who" did not insure the inclusion of his own in general or medical dictionaries of biography, though J. M. Wheeler's "Biographical Dictionary of Freethinkers"\* devotes a few lines to him. On the contrary, Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) appears in biographical dictionaries as an English political economist, author of "Principle of Population"; and our encyclopedias define "malthusianism" as pertaining to his theory that population, unless hindered by checks, tends to increase more rapidly than the means of subsistence. Evidently the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association should perpetuate upon its records the name of an ignored, but influential, son of the Pocumtuck valley or of its ramparts,—the name of Charles Knowlton, M.D., of Ashfield.

A century ago two Americans, Dr. Knowlton and Robert Dale Owen,† were impressed by the malthusian theory and wrote upon birth control, but with an interest in eugenics and racial improvement as well as in the theory of Malthus. The first edition of Mr. Owen's "Moral Physiology" appeared in December, 1830, and this work and Dr. Knowlton's went through many editions, at least nine of each being published in this country before 1850.

Norman E. Himes, a former associate professor of economics and sociology at Clark University and the source of much of the material for this brief paper, says that "The American tracts of Knowlton and Owen were issued in England and quietly circulated for forty years, until the publication of the 'Fruits of Philosophy' was finally vindicated in 1878 in the Court of Queen's Bench. This was the so-called Knowlton trial. There was, how-

\* London, 1889.

† 1801-1877, a native of England.





ever, a minor setback in the successful prosecution of Edward Truelove for the publication of Owen's 'Moral Physiology.' "

That vindication was long after the death of Dr. Knowlton. His life was turbulent, as he was prosecuted in various courts of Massachusetts for his publications, and was persecuted for his religious beliefs, which seem to have been agnostic rather than atheistic.

A new minister was installed in Ashfield in 1833 and considered it his duty to preach a severe sermon against Dr. Knowlton. A highly respected member of the church commented severely upon the sermon, was excommunicated and was later reinstated. Dr. Knowlton wrote in defence of himself a pamphlet, entitled "A History of the Recent Excitement in Ashfield," which may be found in our P.V.M.A. library. The net result seems to have been the dismissal of the minister in 1835; but opinions were in those days worth fighting for, and a little later in the same church two choristers led two choirs singing two tunes at one time, thereby perfectly demonstrating the existing lack of harmony.

After the death of Dr. Charles Knowlton, his son, Dr. Charles L., who had begun the practice of medicine in the town of Worthington, was induced to return to Ashfield. Some eighteen years later he removed to Northampton, though the people of Ashfield desired him to remain with them and circulated a petition that he do so. The doctor considered it a good joke that one of the men most active in the movement was the town undertaker.

But two documents in the handwriting of Dr. Charles Knowlton are known to exist: first, his unsigned doctoral thesis in the library of the Dartmouth Medical School; and, second, his will in the files of the Probate Court for this county. This paper, containing his only remaining autographs, includes his parenthetical comment on the customary phrasing of the time: "In the name of God, Amen. (So says the Form) I, Charles Knowlton of Ashfield . . . ."





The detailed inventory and appraisal of his estate, prepared in 1850, begins with "The homestead of said deceased, situated in said Ashfield, containing one acre, with the buildings thereon \$1,600: Office and lot containing about two acres \$500." The list of personal property should be read with realization that during the last ninety years many things medical have been proved or disproved which were uncertain in the days of Charles Knowlton. Mingled with phials, mortar and pestle, traveling drug case, "old Electerizing Machine," medical pamphlets, surgical instruments, live stock, promissory notes, furniture and furnishings, are these books—among many others: *Moral Physiology* (appraised at ten cents), *Paines Theological Works*, *Facts in Mesmerism*, *Rights of Women*, *Halls Diagnosis*, *Youatts Cattle Doctor*, *Female Education*, *Library of Romance*, *Bachelor and Owens discussion*, *Animal Magnetizer*, *Whites Episcopal Church*, *Cooper on Libel*, *Abercrombie on Brain*, 2 vols. *Phrenology*, *Age of Reason*, *Celebrated Trials*, *Church of Rome*, *Fellows Ancient Mysteries*, *Voltaire Dictionary*, *Dickinsons Testament*, *Free enquirer*, and A lot of old Books, pamphlets and Newspapers.

Perhaps this was a partial inventory of his interests and convictions, to be judged by the knowledge of his period: certainly Charles Knowlton, M.D., of Ashfield, was a student, a fearless man, a champion of the right as he saw it, and a very considerable factor in the decline of the birth rate in England some thirty years after death came to him in the hills of Franklin County.

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## THE HURRICANE FLOOD

BY CHARLES SIDNEY SEVERANCE

Some creature of doom must have looked down from King Philip's rock early in the week of Sept. 19, 1938,





and silently drawn back his lips in a sardonic grin. For from dawn of Tuesday, Sept. 20, to the end of the week, the average citizen of the valley experienced enough destruction to last him a lifetime.

Rain, which had intermittently fallen for two weeks, started to pelt down in earnest during the 19th, accumulating an all-time one day record of 4.34 inches, according to reports kept by officials of the Turners Falls Power and Electric Company. Earth began sliding from the hilltops to the valleys below, covering streambeds, roadways—even railroad tracks.

Near 5 a.m. on Sept. 20, 1938, a westbound special freight train steamed from the East Deerfield railyards. About a third of a mile out, the engine, tender and two freight cars slid off the tracks and down an embankment, killing a fireman and trainman, and fatally injuring the engineer. A fourth crewman sustained injuries.

The cause was directly attributed to the water cascading steadily from broken skies, for on the tracks, where the train started its fall, was found a large deposit of earth.

Then water began to rise in the county rivers, jumping past the 30-foot level in the Deerfield in the afternoon of the 21st. Muddy water from rapidly swelling brooks and rivers closed all traffic on main arteries of travel through the valley that day, but it was still possible to get out through use of high, back roads.

Just after Chairman John W. Haigis of the county committee called out the Red Cross to stand by for any emergency, a freak hurricane bound from the West Indies to Florida, but thrown off its course by a steady warm stream of air blowing south along the Atlantic seaboard, forced itself up the Connecticut River valley from Long Island Sound.

For a period of over an hour, wind travelling as rapidly as 75 miles an hour swirled over the area, snapping the oldest trees like matchsticks, overturning automobiles cruising the still open roads, toppling church





steeple, whipping up flood waters, destroying roofs and causing the greatest excitement and awe the county had seen in more than one hundred and fifty years of history-crammed existence.

And still the ugly, muddy waters in the Connecticut, Deerfield, Green, Millers and the thousand smaller rivers and brooks throughout the valley, continued to rise. The combination of flood water and the hurricane destroyed all communication by land, wire and water between towns throughout thousands of square miles of New England, some of which was not repaired for as long as two weeks.

Farmers, city-dwellers, the state, county, and towns lost untold millions of dollars in roads, highways, buildings, land. To many a Connecticut valley onion and tobacco owner, it meant not only the loss of his entire year's labors, but spelled his permanent, financial ruin.

Indiscriminate washing of land along the Connecticut and Deerfield rivers eliminated top soil from the land, while in other areas it deposited silt considered by farmers to be useless to raise crops for years to come.

It took until Saturday for the citizens and town officials to obtain a coherent picture of just what had happened in the little more than five hours when the hurricane and flood was at its height the evening of Sept. 21. Then it was that Orange selectmen reported to a meeting of all county selectmen held in Greenfield on Saturday afternoon that her damage was at the figure for Orange of \$1,300,000.

In the Orange area, 44 stores were damaged to the extent of \$50,000, a citizen's committee chairman from that town reported. Industrial damage was estimated at \$768,000, since without exception the manufacturing concerns in that town lie along the Millers River. The Millers River has for generations had the reputation of rising more rapidly and farther than any other stream in the area. High water mark was four feet four inches above the 1936 flood.





Other damage at Orange included 341 homes water-soaked or cluttered with fallen trees, for a total of \$350,000. Damage to a second class of homes, numbering 1000, came to \$65,000. Six filling stations were inundated and damage estimates ran as high as \$15,000. \$25,000 was lost through roads and bridges.

As pessimistic a picture of the devastation as any, was presented by Charlemont's selectman, Frank Wells, who said a total of 19 roads were closed for many months to come. Trees, as thick as the forest they once were, cluttered many of these roads, a story that was echoed and re-echoed by the press and officials of every type and description, as well as by ordinary travellers from all parts of the county.

Only half a mile of the many miles of roads in the town of Hawley remained negotiable, Philip L. Stiles, chairman of the selectmen, glumly reported. Twelve bridges were wiped out in that town, he said.

So bad was the bridge situation in Ashfield, a representative from that district reported, that it would be necessary to call on volunteers from that town to put in makeshift bridges. Subsequent events proved that many an Ashfield man and his employees forgot their own serious problems on the farm to turn in and erect more than a dozen log bridges that served Ashfield travellers for several months, until state highway department officials could get construction crews into that area.

Greenfield, a town which has been called the "city of elms"—where for several decades citizens have fought tooth and nail every tree removal—suffered most from tree losses, Charles Fairhurst, chairman of the board of selectmen, reported. During the height of the hurricane, it was impossible to travel either north or south on any local street, I recall.

Charges hurled by an official of the Glassine Company of Monroe Bridge on the Deerfield River mirrored a nearly universal reaction of citizens in that valley that the New England Power Company officials had been up





to some "monkey-shines" at the Whitingham, Vermont, earth dam the afternoon of the hurricane. For many weeks, despite denials and proffered proof, it was stubbornly held by the citizens most injured by the flood that the water had been allowed to go out of the dam that Wednesday afternoon and had added to the havoc created by the torrential stream.

These were some of the highspots of the hurricane and flood as seen by town officials. Each of the particular elements of damage were naturally repeated, almost without number, throughout the valley, and the reactions and particular sidelights were typical of each of the areas involved. The combination of such events plus the personalities and the peculiar geography of each section produced individual tragedies, and comedies as well.

Probably none of the many who are interested in statistics have ever compiled a list of damages sustained privately and it would be foolhardy to attempt an estimate. But the damage done public property, coupled with wild spendthrift allocation of state funds by a politically-minded Democratic governor and a politically-minded Republican legislature brought the total state damages to estimates running as high as \$300,000,000.

The most costly, though not most spectacular damage, was done valley roads and bridges. In Franklin county, a total of 130 bridges were wiped out, including several historic covered spans that had stood for over 100 years. Charlemont reported 35 bridges out, Colrain missed 26, Ashfield lost 20 and Buckland reported 14 gone.

Through it all, the New Englander that inhabits the valley showed courage and patience and a "stiff upper lip" that has been his heritage from the early settlers. So it really was no news at all when Chairman John W. Haigis reported the Red Cross had received not a call for help during the entire period.

Only three persons lost their lives from high water or falling trees, but minor injuries ran well into the thou-





sands and great inconvenience and even hardship was experienced by many thousands living in this fertile valley.

As in all floods, the Boston and Maine railroad company suffered severely. In addition to the water damage, felled trees across tracks in all directions caused tie-up of service. The major trouble, as contrasted with the 1927 flood and the 1936 flood, came not so much on the north and south routes as it did on west and east tracks. Railroads in all directions, to be sure, were closed to all traffic for several days, but almost within a week, service was resumed south from Greenfield and north to Vermont.

Not so on the east and west divisions. There, major rail trestles had been wiped off the face of the earth by roaring Deerfield, Little Chickley and Millers rivers. Trestles were missing at Savoy, Charlemont, Shelburne Falls, Erving, Orange and Athol. So great was the damage that there was talk for some time, which even crept into print, that the cost of replacing these trestles might well send the Boston and Maine careening into bankruptcy. At any rate, construction did not reach a stage where all traffic was resumed, even on limited schedule, for over a month. Workmen were still working the right of ways from this flood as late as the fall of 1939.

The flood waters fell as rapidly as they came. Its damage had been appraised and future havoc from similar causes might be guarded against. But the millions of board feet of felled timber on many an ancestral acre, which had been swept out of life, could not soon be replaced.

There was a concerted cry by the farmers and by county leaders for help, the first because of the financial loss sustained, and the latter because of the tremendous fire hazard the miles of matted trees and undergrowth would become when spring arrived, the snow had gone, and the material had dried. From industries also came cries for help and threats that if help was not given them





they would abandon the county to its own devices. From selectmen, particularly rulers of the hill towns where capital is scarce, came cries and dire prognostications that without financial help the towns would go into bankruptcy.

The answers to these calls were made in a variety of ways and by a variety of agents. One of the first, and most important to many a farmer, was the establishment Dec. 2, 1938, of the Northeastern Timber Salvage administration as part of the U. S. Forestry Service, working in collaboration with the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

This administrative agency, one of whose district headquarters is at present located in Greenfield, bargained with landowners to purchase their fallen timber in three grades, depending on amount of knots present or disease discernible. This timber was trimmed by the landowner, hauled by him to government storing spots where it was cut up by either himself or the government after purchase by the foot.

The government established more than 45 purchasing depots in Franklin county alone, the majority being placed near ponds strategically located throughout the county and the remainder at fields which soon became known as dry storage spots. Here the government contracted with private sawyers, some of them coming from as far as West Virginia, to saw the timber and stack it for sale.

At the wet storage spots, the logs were cut to lengths which could be handled with ease and dumped in the water until some later time when the saw mills could get around to handle them.

By the end of January, 1940, the Northeastern Timber Salvage administration had cleared 114,854 acres of land in this area and was faced with only 114 acres more to clear. Throughout New England, the agency had salvaged 632 million board feet, while private sources accounted for an additional 385 million board feet. The





government agency has accounted for 66,208,000 board feet in this state alone.

In the fall of 1939, the administration became largely a selling agency for this timber. Presenting problems unique in the history of lumbering—since nowhere else in the history of this country has logging been conducted on such a vast scale—the administration has attempted to market this timber while it was still good. Predominantly of soft woods, the timber has been sold in small amounts, perhaps the average being 10,000,000 board feet, to private corporations of which the New England Box Company at Greenfield is one. The remainder has been contracted for by one Michigan logger.

Proceeds of the sales, which exceeded the total paid by the government for the raw material and labor of conversion, has been or will be divided between the various timber owners who contributed their felled timber.

The second major source of recovery staged for the area was by state and federal grants for highways and bridges. At this writing, the majority of the work has been done on more than 100 roads in Franklin county, including serious washouts on the Mohawk trail in Charlemont and Savoy, the Sunset trail in Ashfield and Conway, and route 2 in Erving and Orange.

Work has been done under the state department alone, the state engineers working in conjunction with the WPA, CCC, and other government agencies.

In addition to the task already accomplished to remedy the damage created by wind and rain, the protests voiced by the area more than a year ago pointed to a serious shortcoming in the mechanical set-up of flood protection. In fact, it showed that such a thing, while talked of for many years, had never been put into practice. As a result, the area is just beginning to see construction of a series of projects theoretically designed to hold flood water within the narrow confines of normal streambeds, by three separate efforts.

The federal government is just beginning to do for





the Connecticut River what the state has largely accomplished for a multitude of smaller streams throughout the area. Dredging of the bottom of the river has been accomplished as far north as Northampton, with the expectation that by deepening the river beds, the entire overall height of the bed itself will be increased and the flow of water may swell so much more without danger of running over the banks.

Such work has also been done by the state on the Green and Millers rivers and in some sections of the Deerfield and in a number of other streambeds.

The second phase of flood control concerns the artificial development of higher river banks, this time by dike. On the Connecticut from Springfield north, the government with huge machinery and large numbers of men is presently engaged in a three-year construction project, started last summer, to build dikes of earth and concrete or both on those river banks which records show most readily overflow.

An offshoot of these two steps is the building of rip-rap; something that has been practiced throughout the area for years, but never on such extended scale as the state contracts and government grants have called for. Rip-rap of small tributary streams along whose borders important roads have been constructed, to an extent which theoretically, at least, should safeguard state highways. The rip-rap includes such diverse ideas as standard rock layers, solid concrete wall construction and gravel-covered earth banks.

The third, and by far most complicated and spectacular, is the construction of reservoirs, to retain millions of gallons of flood water. In this area, there are projected dams at Birch hill in New Hampshire, designated as protection for this part of the Connecticut valley, for Knightsville and Surrey in New Hampshire and for Tully, on the Millers River, designated as protection for the Millers River and the Connecticut valley. These are a few of the many slated for construction throughout the





state on various main arteries of water escape, and tributaries.

On some of them, work was already begun by the end of January, 1940, in others plans had been completed and still others were pipe dreams. All were theoretically designed to afford flood protection in answer to demand of residents.

Construction of all of them may never occur—and mainly because of the terrific fight waged between the states of Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts against the U. S. War department, which has control of the federal end of the project.

This fight, revolving around alleged attempts of the government to establish further control of the rivers and the establishment of government power plants, has little place in this paper because of its very nature. However, because it has held up the flood protection deemed so vital by all those who are intelligently concerned over the area's fate, it should be mentioned. It is as old a fight as any of the people of the central plain of the North American continent have had—namely states rights versus central control.

A brief look at the industrial side of the picture will bring this paper to a close. The most vociferous cries for help following the flood and hurricane came from this element of the life of the valley. By the end of January, 1940, they had not entirely died out, and as I shall attempt to show, there is small prospect of their doing so in the immediate future.

Let us, for the sake of brevity, take but two cases—those of the Greenfield Tap and Die Corporation located in Greenfield and Montague, and the New England Power Company's dam in Wendell. They represent two types of industries, and their fate, to date, has been entirely different.

At Wendell depot, prior to the 1938 flood, there had stood for more than fifty years, a power dam of the New





England Power Company, which supplied in late years as much as 65 per cent of the town's entire tax revenue. In 1938, the Millers River carried this dam away. Faced with the prospect of rebuilding on a site not altogether favorable to the company from the standpoint of their markets, the officials of the power company concluded they would continue nature's destruction and remove the building as well. Thus Wendell in two strokes lost most of its revenue. It is at present desperately cutting appropriations to the bone in an endeavor not to become another of the slowly growing list of Massachusetts towns that has gone bankrupt.

At Greenfield the Green River plant of the Greenfield Tap and Die Corporation is situated directly on the Green River, less than half a mile from the junction of that stream with the Deerfield River, which in turn flows less than another half-mile before uniting with the Connecticut. This plant, the town's oldest industrial structure, including land but excluding its equipment, was worth \$219,500 on the first of January, 1939.

Following the 1938 flood, which was caused like all others at this place by water backing up the Deerfield and Green from the Connecticut, the company reported to its stockholders that the damage was about \$26,000. In thirteen years, from three floods, it had suffered a total damage in excess of \$55,000.

Federal and state governments and their elected representatives were called upon and suggested the idea of dikes to protect the plant, and the property of residents on the other side of Green River. The army appeared to be interested and, after surveys, sent in recommendations; but feeling that the army might be tying and untying red tape for some three years, appeals were made to one financial agent after another. The W.P.A. officials of the state seemed but slightly interested and after several months rejected the entire proposition. Then another combination of forces met in Washington with





higher W.P.A. officials and these evinced somewhat greater interest. As outlined the project would be financed by the W.P.A. and the state, from whom nothing more than a non-committal answer has as yet been obtained.

I have dealt at length with these instances in Greenfield and Wendell because without the industrial plants in this valley a considerable part of its inhabitants would have to move elsewhere seeking employment. It is also true that such industrial efforts for flood protection as those made by the Greenfield company may result in flood protection to areas which would otherwise remain at the mercy of future floods.

Thus, by the end of January, 1940, the valley has not fully recovered from the havoc created in a little more than five hours the evening of Sept. 21, 1938. Physically, it never can completely recover; but with the aid of federal and state governments, much of the havoc is being repaired, and probably, an equally large share of the work has already been done by individuals in the county through their own efforts.

Life in the valley since that dawn of Sept. 20, 1938, decidedly quickened, and almost solely because of a devastating flood and hurricane that swept through the area, its center the heart of the Connecticut valley and its nature such that for a hundred miles east to the ocean, there was a clean sweep of destruction, while less than a mile west, in most sections, only heavy rains and a little wind was experienced.

Terror and awe, excitement and a sense of the novel reigned for two days Sept. 21–23, 1938. During that period, the area experienced a freak hurricane and flood that was very serious, although in many valley areas not reaching the proportions of the 1936 flood. However, the effects of the two, plus the accumulations of the 1936 and 1927 devastations, have caused several new features to appear in this valley.





The permanent effects upon human life in the valley must be considered to be mere scratches on the surface—as a scratch is received on the hand. However, much has been learned from the experience, though the life here goes on as before.

NOTE: Seventy-one accounts of the 1938 hurricane are listed in the "Yankee" magazines of September '39 and April '40.





## FORMER PRESIDENTS

George Sheldon, John Sheldon, Jennie M. Arms Sheldon

## FORMER RECORDING SECRETARIES

N. Hitchcock, Margaret Miller, Rev. R. E. Birks, Wm. L. Harris

## FORMER TREASURERS

Nathaniel Hitchcock, John Sheldon, George Arms Sheldon

## OFFICERS FOR 1940

*President*, Francis Nims Thompson, *Court House, Greenfield.*

*Vice Presidents*, Hazel Sheldon Nichols, Edward E. Whiting.

*Recording Secretary*, Margaret Harris Allen.

*Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols, *220 Main St., Greenfield.*

*Council*, the above officers and the following:

Frank L. Boyden, Minnie Ellen Hawks, Margaret Miller and Jane Atherton Wright, until February 25, 1941; Helen C. Boyden, John W. Heselton, Lucy Cutler Kellogg and Agnes P. Sheldon, 1942; Jonathan P. Ashley, Ernest E. Coffin, Mary W. Fuller and Margaret C. Whiting, 1943.

## TRUSTEES

*George Sheldon Memorial Fund*: W. Herbert Nichols, 1941; Frank L. Boyden, 1942; Agnes P. Sheldon, 1943.

*Sheldon Publishing Fund*: Hazel Sheldon Nichols, 1941; Jonathan P. Ashley, 1942; Margaret C. Whiting, 1943.

*Old Indian House Homestead*: Margaret Harris Allen, 1942; W. Herbert Nichols, 1946; William L. Harris, 1948.

*Charlotte Alice Baker Fund*: Curators of the Frary House Estate, named below.

*The Permanent Fund*: The Finance Committee, named below.

## COMMITTEES

*Executive*: President, Treasurer and Frank L. Boyden.

*Finance*: J. W. Heselton, Hazel S. Nichols, F. N. Thompson.

*Auditors*: Carlos Allen, Ernest E. Coffin.

## MEMORIAL HALL

Houses the unique *Sheldon Collection* of Colonial, Indian and prehistoric relics, and memorials of dwellers in the Pocumtuck (or Deerfield) valley. In charge of the *Executive Committee*, named above.

## FRARY HOUSE

Gift of C. Alice Baker. The oldest dwelling in this region; containing rare and beautiful furniture and furnishings. Now first open to the public. Margaret Harris Allen, Helen Childs Boyden, W. Herbert Nichols, *Curators of the Frary House Estate.*





# POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

## REPORT

This is the third of the "annuals" which will constitute Volume IX of our "History and Proceedings." Each contains original matter edited and published in a limited edition under a vote by the corporation.

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We trust that this publication will be welcomed by members of the P.V.M.A., by historical societies and libraries, and by a public interested in the Old Deerfield region.

Respectfully submitted,

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;

W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer*.

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.





## SEVENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

1941

The village of Old Deerfield and the twenty-fifth day of February: also "Mr. Sheldon's weather"—the heavens smiling approval upon the continuance of meetings instituted by the historian of Deerfield! *In the Council Room* the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association held its afternoon meeting, and first were read tributes to two former councilors, William Lombard Harris and Henry B. Barton; one paper prepared by a daughter and read by Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks, and the other written by Mrs. Kellogg and read by the subject's friend Judge Thompson.

The records of the 1940 meeting being read and approved, all *officers and councilors were reelected*. The president reported for the executive committee and Mrs. Allen on Frary House. Miss Margaret Randolph Hitchcock of Amherst then presented her study of some persistent characteristics of the Hitchcocks of Deerfield, and the president read a communication by Mrs. Mary Field Fuller concerning the Misses Allen. He also read to an appreciative meeting the account by Mrs. Katherine Holton Cram of the many industries and occupations of Colrain, a town dear to the judge as the birth-place of his father.

*The Council meeting followed and financial reports* by the treasurer and five boards of trustees were approved and *appointments made*.

*At the town hall* Mrs. Henry C. Wells and an efficient corps of willing helpers prepared and served the something-more-than-supper which our constant friends, the women of Deerfield, had contributed; and again the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy sang for us, under the direction of Mr. Oatley, to whom we are also indebted.





The *speakers of the evening* were Doctors Dole, Atkins and Pratt. Dr. Dole told in a graphic way of the daily life of a little girl on a New England farm, indoors and out, more than seventy years ago. Rev. Dr. Pratt spoke upon the message conveyed by the memorials of Colonial events in our valley, and Rev. Dr. Atkins talked of the character and charm of this region as he first knew it nearly fifty years ago.

The community of interest of village, academy and memorial association was emphasized by President Thompson who said that in the same *town hall* more than seventy such annual meetings of the association had been held; that in the association's "*Frery House*" Deerfield Academy had been organized (April 18, 1797); and that *Memorial Hall* was built (1797) for the academy and purchased (1878) by our association. He urged those having a real interest in Old Deerfield to seek membership in the Memorial Association.

During an unavoidable delay in printing these addresses Doctor Mary P. Dole published her book "A Doctor in Homespun," which included with much else her most interesting talk to our association and prevented its inclusion here; but made it possible for everyone to possess a bit of the essence of New England—the story of a period and of a brave busy life told in pithy pungent phrases.

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## REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT

History making in the eastern hemisphere has deeply overshadowed all other present events; yet 2,349 persons visited the Sheldon Collection in our hall last season. Only 16 in March and 42 in April; but 157 in May, 267 in June, 522 in July, 865 in August, 277 in September and 203 in October. The visitors came from 37 states and 5 foreign countries. I greatly enjoyed exhibiting Memorial Hall and Frery House to a large group of





English children and to the Northfield Historical Society.

Among donations were a stone axe-head found by Houghton Thorne on the west side of Deerfield river, given by Walter Thorne; Elijah Harmon's civil war gun, given by his son and daughter; the Unitarian service flag, with gold star for Tom Ashley, and world war service roll of honor; the trunk of Adoniram Judson who went in 1813 to Burma, as a Baptist missionary—this presented by Rev. D. H. Strong of Buckland. Embroidered and other clothing of civil war days were presented by Hope E. Cushman. Among books received was the Stebbins genealogy from Willis M. Stebbins.

Your executive committee has done nothing more radical than to trim some trees west of Memorial Hall and remove a cankered elm near others and the fence. An important discovery has been some 25 sets of the History of Deerfield, after Mrs. Biddle had reported the edition exhausted a year ago.

A survey of historical records, being carried on under direction of Mr. William S. Piper as a part of the program of the Works Project Administration has examined and listed some 10,000 items of our collection of an estimated 25,000. Through the cooperation of town officials this has been done at the town office building. The expense has been merely for supplies, and the result will be a comprehensive listing of the collection—"of exceptional value and interest" accumulated through the years by the intelligent industry of the Sheldons.

We will have to place the collection in holders, arranged in more systematic order than was possible during the gathering, so that this unique source material may be more readily available to investigators. There is much information here concerning the old families of Deerfield.

Our fireproof wing should be the repository of the irreplaceable documentary evidence of the history, genealogy and biography of this region. One who has gath-





ered such material and failed to either publish it or place it (or a copy) in Memorial Hall has failed to take the most essential step toward its preservation.

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## REPORT BY THE CURATORS OF FRARY HOUSE

BY MARGARET HARRIS ALLEN

As is shown by our financial report, the South Wing, downstairs, was made habitable, with fresh paint and paper, a bathroom, oil burner and electricity, in the spring of 1941.

Frary House was cleaned and made ready for exhibition. The collection of china and glass in the Benedict Arnold cupboard has been protected by a glass door, and lighted. A glass protects the pewter over the dining room fireplace; and by means of a gate and fence, the pewter in the yellow room has been safeguarded. A great deal of money could be spent putting each room and its contents in its best possible condition, but, until our income is much larger, we feel that this is impossible. We have tried to accomplish all that we could without added expense.

The house was opened the 13th of May to the guests of Spring Day. On June 22nd, all the people of Deerfield were invited to visit Frary House as our guests. Over 100 people responded.

The house was opened to the public the first of June, with Mrs. Bertha Arms of South Deerfield as Caretaker. Frary House is open from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. Tuesdays through Saturdays; closed Mondays, and open Sundays from 1 P.M. to 6 P.M.

The last of July a sign was put up west of the house. This was made from an old wide board found in the shed attic of Frary House, and hung from one of Mr. Con Kelley's graceful brackets.





In several of the rooms have been placed "Hostess Cards" which give some of the interesting stories about each room.

It seemed advisable to do some advertising. Fifty descriptive cards were prepared and sent to well-known taverns and inns to be posted. We also had printed 1,000 postcards which were given to our guests to send to their friends.

This advertising was released about August 1st, and our increase in admissions after that date seems to have justified the added expense. Our guest register for our first season contains 1,995 names.

We are greatly indebted to many people for help of various kinds in preparing Frary House for exhibition, and for getting out our advertising. To these generous friends we wish to express our appreciation.

There are many things waiting for our attention; we have tried to take care of the most important ones first. We hope that as the years go by we shall be able to make Frary House an even finer example of the home of the early New England settler.

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## WILLIAM LOMBARD HARRIS

August 5, 1863—January 30, 1941

BY MARGARET HARRIS ALLEN

William Lombard Harris was born August 5th, 1863 at the home at "The Bars." His father, William D. Harris, came from Vermont; his mother was formerly Harriet Augusta Lombard of Warren, Massachusetts.

When he was about four, he moved with his parents to Chicago where his father was in business for several years. The Chicago fire occurred during this period. My father remembered being hurriedly awakened and dressed. A shift of wind, however, sent the fire in another direction, so the Chicago home was spared. We





have what is evidently a small boy's theme on the subject of the Chicago fire. Neat, stiff handwriting tells us that "the fire made about 70,000 people objects of Charity for a whole winter!"

He attended school in Chicago, and after the family's return to Deerfield, went to a little schoolhouse which stood near the present stone Pumphouse at "The Bars," where one of his teachers was the late Miss Frances S. Allen. Later he attended Deerfield Academy. In 1879, with Robert Fuller, he entered Nichols Academy in Dudley, Massachusetts, where he spent at least two years. Mr. and Mrs. Barker, former Heads of the old Deerfield Academy, were principals at Dudley. Skiing and snowshoeing were unknown sports; but the boys of those days did a great deal of skating, and had very good times.

I am not just sure when my father began the study of the violin, but it must have been in the early 80's. He studied with Podjorski of Northampton, and spent two winters in Washington, D. C. with an uncle, where he continued his studies and played in an orchestra. In 1885, back in Deerfield, we know that he had several pupils. He kept up his violin for many years. As a child, I can remember going to sleep by the music of the violin and piano which my father and mother played.

In the 80's and 90's the chief farm crop was tobacco; butter was made two or three times a week, carried to Greenfield and sold to the Mansion House. Many references are found in old letters to driving sheep to pasture and shearing sheep. However, in the later years, the main industry was dairying.

There was a great deal of sociability in those days. It was considered of no moment to hitch up a horse to drive to "the Street" for calls or Church services. Visits to the Vermont homestead at Windham and the one at Warren were frequent and generally accomplished with the horse and buggy.

Father's only brother, Julian Chapin, was born in





1885. The death of his mother, seven months later, was a tragic blow to my father. During his stay at Dudley and his winters in Washington, he and his mother exchanged letters with great regularity. When he was home, they often rode together, or spent the evening playing duets; and when his mother went, his whole world seemed to have come to an end.

In March, 1887, he married Mary Jackson Stebbins, daughter of John H. and Mary E. Stebbins of Deerfield. For four years they lived at Bernardston. In 1891, however, owing to the poor health of his father, he returned to Deerfield to carry on the farm which became his home for the next fifty years. He loved the old farm and the country manner of life. He was fond of all animals, and became greatly attached to his driving horses. Later, his team was replaced with a truck, but up to last Fall, he made a round of the farm buildings every evening and ended up with a look at the horse stable to make sure his horses were comfortable for the night. All dogs and cats he considered his friends. But not hens!

He was fond of shrubs and flowers, especially roses. Six pink azaleas which he carefully transplanted 35 years ago still brighten the garden every May.

He served on the Deerfield Board of Selectmen from 1904 to 1917, and for 30 years on the Board of Water Commissioners in the Water System, of which he was one of the organizers, and Treasurer. In 1899 he became a member of the P.V.M.A. and served as Recording Secretary from 1916 to 1938. He was a member of the First Congregational Church of Deerfield, serving that body first as member of the Executive Committee and then as a Trustee.

The Old Deerfield Cemetery Association, the Village Improvement Association and the progress of the Deerfield schools also claimed his interest. He made many sacrifices that his children might have an education.

Although he was always interested in the public affairs of the day, it was very easy to switch his attention





to the past where his memory of dates, people and events was very keen. From the great fire in Chicago he could take you through his struggles in the blizzard of 1888 as he made his way home from Greenfield, guided by the tip of an occasional fence post after he had left his exhausted horse in some friendly barn.

With my mother he long ago became interested in tracing the family genealogy, visiting old cemeteries, and corresponding with numerous town clerks.

I like best to think of him, not as a member of this and that, but as a kindly, friendly man. In this busy, hurried world, we should pause to remember the men and women who faithfully and loyally carry their simple daily tasks to the end.

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## HENRY B. BARTON

May 21, 1853—September 9, 1940

BY LUCY CUTLER KELLOGG

When a man like the late Henry B. Barton passes on, one naturally stops to consider what were the forces in nature, by way of ancestry and environment, which tended to produce and develop the characteristics he displayed throughout his life of eighty-seven years.

The surname of Barton first appears in New England history among the early Puritan settlers at Salem; and one, Edward, is the first mentioned. The name itself is thought to be derived from the old English Bar (defense) and ton (town) and thus signifies the "Defense" or "Defender of the town." The early generations of Bartons in New England led a pioneer life, hence as good citizens carried on the significance of their name. Those of succeeding generations, as I knew them through ancestral connection, fulfilled that tradition under ever changing civic conditions, for as time went on, the need of defense of the town was merged into defense of its in-





stitutions, civic and business privileges, and their promotion.

The first Edward pioneered in Salem about 1640, then successively in Marblehead, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Cape Porpoise, Maine, now Kennebunkport.

His son Matthew was in all these towns pursuing the trade of a "ship-wright" and following the sea, while *his* son Samuel of the third generation eventually became one of the early settlers of the Plantation of Framingham. On the day he sold his Framingham possessions in 1716, he bought at Oxford one thirtieth of the English settlement there—the site of the earlier Huguenot settlement—thus becoming one of the thirty landed proprietors of Oxford village. Through his eighth child, Lieutenant Jedidiah, and then two successive generations bearing the name of Isaac, do we come to that ancestor of Henry Barton, Isaac Barton of the sixth generation who came to this immediate section, living in Bernardston, Leyden and Greenfield and at some time, for a short period, in New Salem.

Isaac's son Benjamin about 1826 purchased the well-known Barton Farm at Riverside-Gill, which later was owned by Bradford, son of Benjamin, and from him came into possession of Henry B. Barton.

The latter was born in the house now known as the Old Red House Tea Room, on the French King highway, on May 21, 1853, one of the children of Bradford B. and Mary (Frost) Barton. Both parents died in his youth and he went to live with his bachelor uncle, Leonard Barton, in the house which was nearly ever after his home and which was built the year of his birth, 1853.

His early public school education was supplemented by attendance in 1866–67 at Powers Institute, Bernardston, which was then considered the educational center of Franklin County. In early life he began to fulfill the ancestral traditions of public service and became a member of the Gill school committee. Not long after, there





applied for a position as teacher in Riverside, one Emma L., daughter of Lucius M. and Laura (Newton) Weatherhed of Bernardston. She was successful in her quest, and the acquaintance then formed culminated in their marriage on May 1, 1881. This union was terminated fifty-nine years later by the death of Henry Barton on September nine, nineteen hundred and forty. In their early married life a short time was spent in Springfield and Greenfield, but soon they returned to their Riverside home.

Mr. Barton held one of the longest records for public service in the county, filling the position of clerk and treasurer for the town of Gill forty-three consecutive years; retiring therefrom in 1933 when he reached the age of eighty years. He it was who gathered the Vital Statistics of the town from public and family records, churches and cemeteries, and which are now to be found in published form in all the libraries in the state, and beyond.

He served as selectman and assessor, and in 1908 as a member of the house of representatives in Boston. He was long on the board of Trustees of the Crocker Institution for Savings at Turners Falls, and on that of the Franklin County Agricultural Society. Of the latter he was a member over sixty-five years, joining in the time when a pass for life to the fairs was issued to all members as they joined; a policy which nearly wrecked the society in later years.

His club life was represented by membership in the Guiding Star Grange in Greenfield, and the Connecticut Valley Pomona Grange; being a past master of the latter. He was a charter member of the Home Aid Society of Gill, later known as the Riverside Community Club, and for many years a member of the Senior Club of Bernardston, the meetings of which he rarely missed, even when infirmity overtook him. He attended for the last time the one held the July prior to his decease, and acted as presiding officer.





His life work however centered on the home farm, and in the 1870s and 1880s surely, he with his uncle Leonard, brought to perfection the raising of watermelons, muskmelons and cantaloupes, all of which found a ready market and were noted as most luscious products.

His town and county history strongly appealed to him. He had a marvelous memory to the last, and accurately recalled the events of his youth and the many stories he then heard. His keen, analytical mind was recognized as an infallible source of knowledge by those who called upon him for information or confirmation concerning obscure historical items. Naturally all this led him to become interested in the work of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and he became a member in 1907. Two years later he was honored by election as one of the Councillors, which office he held for nine consecutive years.

His own family records went back to the Isaac of the sixth generation, and he took a great interest and pleasure in these and in his Barton family history. When he found that the records of the earlier generations had been compiled and published in 1930 in a well known historical quarterly, he lost no time in securing that copy; which he was always glad to share with others of the family, that they in turn might become better acquainted with the lives of their forebears.

Quiet, unassuming in manner, genial and hospitable, enjoying the society of his friends, he played his part well in the drama of life and left to his wife, son and granddaughter, many treasured memories; while the community life—social, civic, and business—which he had helped to build and enrich was left the poorer by the passing of an unusual personality.





“SOME PERSISTENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE  
HITCHCOCKS OF DEERFIELD”

BY MARGARET RANDOLPH HITCHCOCK

There are several traits which have definitely appeared in four generations of a family, which for two of the generations was an almost completely Deerfield family. I refer to the Hitchcocks. The traits I want to trace—and I am only picking out two—as greatly influencing their lives are, first, a most definite scientific trend, and secondly, an interest in and a pleasant talent for producing music.

The first Hitchcock to live in Deerfield was Justin. In his year book he tells of his moving from Springfield to Deerfield—by degrees, as it were, for he came first in February 1774 for a month, then in November, and finally moved there permanently in May 1775, because “at Springfield it cost me too much.” Here in Deerfield he immediately became the “fifer” of the Company of Minute Men as he had been in Springfield.

Also in the year 1775 he says, “I began to teach a singing school in Deerfield the town and church were unhappily divided and I was rather bashful and diffident but I succeeded so as to get the singing considerably revived which had almost run out before. . . .” He was sometimes hired, and sometimes did this gratis. He “had composed several Pieces of Music some of which I introduced into the school and were sung in Public Worship they were chiefly fugging tunes as such music was much in use about this time Mankind are rarely content with a medium in any thing when I learned music the slow tunes were all we sung and a fugging tune would drive people out of the meeting house about this time fugging tunes in the Allegro movement were chiefly in use and people appeared to be pleased with them—tho, some thought them too light and airy.”





He also made two instruments which were crosses between bass viols and cellos. These have been played by his descendants, as well as by him, and are now safe; one in Memorial Hall, and the other in the Hitchcock Memorial Room at Amherst College. In a letter of advice addressed to "Dear Henry" we find this bit— . . . "As you have never resided anywhere but in this town you will no doubt miss the Society you leave and will feel dull and heavy on this account—but you will be careful of taking measures to divert your mind which are hurtful to your Character or interest—one way to divert you is attention to business in the proper hours for it in leisure hours I would recommend reading Music and the Company of respectable people. . . ." "His ruling passion stayed with him till death, for as he was dying he sang 'Winsor.' "

He was a hatter by trade and poor and struggling, but all through his year book he shows the exactness of observation which characterizes his sons and grandchildren; and he was meticulous in this, noting the date when possible and all details whether he was describing the "comet" when he was in Springfield, the "Darkness" of May 1780, the Canker Worms beginning to be noted in 1786 with their eventual destruction by frost in 1794 and the big apple crop the following year, the hurricane in 1788, or just the exact condition of his thumb when it was "put out of joint." He was not interested in the pain or inconvenience of this, but in the looks and the various steps in its healing. In a group of odd manuscripts or journals of Justin's we find this: "Thoughts on the causes of rain and remarks of the winds and weather." This is eight pages on the cause of rain and the progress of storms across the United States. He describes the storms he has seen, and when he cannot draw on his own experiences he draws on Dr. Franklin's. . . . "I saw a cloud moving from southwest to northeast it appeared to be considerably north of west of me and it was clear sky north of it and also south of it the motion





was very slow and there was no wind—after I observed it sometime I perceived some streaks of rain falling from it which continued to increase untill the Sky beyond the cloud was all hid in a thick dark cloud and the rain fell in torrents untill the ground was all covered and ran in brooks—the cloud moved away or disappeared slowly without any wind through the whole—. . . .”

He married a Deerfield girl, Mercy Hoit. The part of his letter to “Mr. David and Mrs. Silence Hoit” proposing for their daughter, which we have left, has been quoted by Mr. Sheldon, I am sure, but I am equally sure that his “dream” has never been used here. This is a folder of four full sized pages written on both sides, and starts out “To Miss Mercy Hoit. You will not suppose that I really ever Dreamt that I have wrote here but that I have endeavoured in some measure to shew the continual Trouble Difficulty perplexity and anxiety we meet with in Dreams, you will if you are critical observe some contradiction between the Second and thirtieth Verses in the first of these I represented the stream gently Descending in the latter swiftly running but you must consider that we was not all while at one place in the river sometimes up the stream and sometimes Down in which way this contradiction may be accounted for.”

“Twas thus I fancied in my Dream  
That you and I my friend  
Was walking by a pleasant stream  
What gently did Descend

. . . .

But new perplexity of mind  
The way we did not know  
With anxious care we sought to find  
The way that we should go

. . . The forked lightning now appears  
And did around us shine  
Then I confessed great was my fears  
And yours exceeded mine.”





They have a most dreadful time with monsters and storms and he awakes after this.

“His dreadful mouth he open'd wide  
Prepared to Devour  
All hopes of life I laid aside  
Being wholly in his power.”

“In this distress I awoke and found my arm twisted around under my head which caused me extreme pain.” Maybe this is a love letter, but he still notices that when he awoke, his arm was twisted.

They had a family of five, three sons and two daughters, all of whom were born in the house he built. This house, on the lane,\* he had built himself, having made the brick and laid in stone and lumber one year, gotten married when the lower floor was finished the next year, and finished the house gradually as they lived in it and more room was needed.

Of the next generation we again have interesting recollections. Of the girls I know little; one was the loved “Aunt Billings” of Conway who was a “great talker,” according to her nephew, Edward, and the other, Charissa, must have been a charmer, as the bachelors of Deerfield gave her a wedding present when she married “Dr. Jonathan Swett of Norway in the District of Maine.”

The boys, however, are close friends of ours, for Edward, of the third generation, left his reminiscences of them all and of visiting those who lived in Deerfield. Henry, the elder brother, lived in the old house, and it was a neat, pleasant house, with a pleasant family life. The girls of that family were near the age of the reminiscer, so that to him life there was more for his sisters, not for a boy. In it was the usual love of music and good conversation which we find in all the homes, and strict ideas of honesty and integrity in all matters was an integral part of it. There was much discussion of the matters

\* The middle lane, “Hitchcock Lane”—the Albany road.





of the church and education; the Unitarians were “way off,” and college education not necessary.

Charles, the middle brother, was the uncle who is most lovingly described in these unpublished reminiscences of his nephew. He again was struggling, living almost in poverty like his father; but he had a singing school, led the singing in church, played the bass viol, and encouraged his children and nephews and nieces in accurate observations by a form of game or conversation while they were working around the place. His house\* was next door to his brother's, the “other house”; he had bought it from his mother's family, and the two houses shared the same well for stock, and life was very close and harmonious in the memory of a small boy.

This boy was so impressed with his visits here that in 1902 at the age of seventy-four, when writing these reminiscences, he describes the kitchen of Uncle Charles' house in such an accurate, vivid and complete fashion that one could reconstruct it from his description, red walls, “tuckaway bed” and all. This kitchen must have been the one comfortable room in the house and was used for everything; for the parlor was used only once or twice a year, and the small bed room downstairs, though it had a fireplace, was “so cold that if I had not had a feather bed I would have frozen.” Cold or not, this house and the visits to it were “Elysium” to the boy.

The youngest of these three boys was the one we know most about, both because of his scientific attainments and positions, and also because there are extant and available more of his writings and journals. He was Edward Hitchcock, the geologist, preacher, teacher, and president of Amherst College. There is a charming letter written to him by his sister Emilia (“Aunt Billings”) when he was in New Haven in 1819 for a short time, telling him all the news of Deerfield (and of Miss White in Amherst) and calls him “a Divine a Mineralo-

\* “The little brown house on the Albany road.”





gist a Botanist a Chemist an Astronomer and a Master of Arts."

As a scientist he is so well known that it is not necessary to mention the fact, but may I call attention to one point in connection with this, that he was a big enough man and scientist so that when it began to seem probable to him that his beloved "bird tracks" were the tracks of some amphibian or reptilian creature, he could draw the attention of the scientific world to that new decision, though it meant throwing out all his published arguments on the animals that had made these tracks.

His home was the most cultured and comfortable of the homes of the three brothers, though to us now it would seem rather Spartan in some ways. It was larger, better heated, and with much company coming and going—company of all sorts, from the farmer, bringing the load of hay down from Deerfield, to visiting scholars and trustees of the college. Here the children were taught singing from the singing book he had brought down from Deerfield, quite a modern up-to-date book, published in 1818 and called,—

"The Deerfield Collection of sacred music

Compiled from the most approved authors, ancient and modern, with a view to that simplicity, which is indispensable, and that variety, which is important in the services of the church, classed according to their, affinities of expression:

together with a Musical Grammar:

Containing the necessary definitions, and a variety of remarks and directions, relative to pronunciation, adaptation, and expression;

to all of which is added an Appendix, containing a few set pieces, and a number of occasional and other hymns, more studiously adjusted than usual, to the measure of the music:

by Samuel Willard  
minister of Deerfield"





He himself had learned his music from the book his father had copied, simply called "The Rules of Singing." In addition to this, the children were all taught or encouraged to play any instrument they could find to play; notably, the piano, flute, and cello. Meanwhile, in his spare moments he composed words and music, or set words he wrote to known music for the students to sing at chapel, church, or commencements.

The next, or third, generation is going to be treated unfairly, for I do not know enough about the Billings cousins or the Swetts to say anything about them, and the Deerfield cousins are all held in your memories better than in mine. To you, Deacon Nat, and Cousin Harriet are people; to me, shadows and names, people I wish I had known really. For this reason, the Amherst branch of the family is the one to be described.

President Edward Hitchcock, Edward the First in the family, had six children who lived to man and womanhood; four girls and two boys. They had been brought up in Amherst and taught, as naturally as they breathed, a love of music and a love and knowledge of scientific things. In this family the girls kept up with the boys in class work, most definitely, in fact ahead of them mostly. They, the girls, all went to Miss Lyon's new school; she had lived in their house for a year before starting the seminary, and taught them all, boys and girls, Latin and spelling.

The gifts in the scientific line were spread thickly, in the musical line not so spread out, but bunchily bestowed. In science Mary, Catherine (or Kate), Jane (or Jennie), Edward and Emily were botanists, Jennie and Emily particularly good ones; Kate had small time to carry on that interest, and with Edward it was subordinate to other interests. Then Charles was a geologist as well as a minister, and Edward a doctor, geologist, and anthropologist. Charles, above all things a geologist, studied and taught geology, teaching for forty years at Dartmouth, and was head of several state surveys at dif-





ferent times. With him for many years lived his sister Mary, and her botanical collections in the main are owned by Dartmouth College. Edward also taught all his life, first at Williston Seminary, where he taught all of the sciences, and then at Amherst where he taught physical education and comparative anatomy, making his greatest contribution in the form of his anthropometric studies.

Kate and Jennie were held down in their botanical work by their families, particularly Kate, who had four children; but Emily, who was widowed early, turned to botany more and more. Her collections are still at Smith College. Any one of this family knew a lot about the pet sciences of the rest, and discussions must have been and indeed were, hot; the real authorities and referees of these must have been the mother and father who were recognized authorities in their fields, and they must often have had to quiet even their fairly adult children.

Musically Edward was the most gifted. He could play the piano, the bass viol or cello, the flute, and the organ (he acted as college organist in his youth) and had a very pleasant tenor voice. This last made him much desired by the various groups who sang oratorios around here, and he continued to do this till the 1900's. His great interest in and encouragement of music in Amherst College was the background for the present music department. In bringing Mr. Bigelow back to the German department he felt that getting him on the faculty would be the starting wedge towards introducing a department of music. Of the sisters, Mary and Emily both played the piano—Emily very well—and they all sang.

The fourth generation is also treated unfairly, for I can only take up the grandchildren of the first Edward. Kate married Henry M. Storrs, a minister, and had four children, three boys and a girl, three of whom grew up. This group did not show much interest in scientific things but were all musical, and were in fact so musical that their mother settled in Germany with them for sev-





eral years that their musical studies might continue. Charles' daughters have all been teachers of sciences, chemistry, physics, and botany, but I have no recollection of any musical ability among them.

Edward's family definitely have carried on both traits; of the seven who grew up, five have made something connected with science their life work, while, again, five had some talent musically. They could hardly help a scientific trend, for it was so much a part of their daily lives. When they took a walk they learned geology and botany from their father; to them it was the usual and natural thing to learn the botanical name of a plant as well as its common one, and to make collections of rocks and minerals and have herbariums. When they went to the shore for the summer they made their collections of shells and sea weeds and border life, and these were all arranged and named in true museum style. In the same way, music was part of their lives; they had a chorus in the family and with a cello, piano, violin, and flute probably had some interesting accompaniments.

Edward, the eldest (this is the third Edward in a row), played the piano, sang very well, and became a doctor. Caroline has taught science for over fifty years in one city, Meriden, Connecticut. Lucy was the artist of the family and had no science at all in her (of course she also had to learn her flowers and rocks and minerals), but she did play the piano very pleasantly. Charles was again no scientist, though a great lover of all growing things and a student of nature, and surely no one in the valley knew more hiding places of plants and animals than he did. He played the cello in his youth, as well as the piano, and bought from his great uncle Charles the cello which his father had borrowed and kept for many years. The five dollars paid for it represented a long hard amount of work for the boy.

Jane Elizabeth, one of the first workers at the Henry Street Settlement in New York and a leader in public health nursing, developed many of the set-ups and serv-





ices which are now in use, and which we take for granted. The next time the district nurse is seen on her rounds, notice the bag she carries; it is the one designed by Jane Elizabeth for her Henry Street nurses. When the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company wanted to put in a nursing service, they called on Jane Elizabeth to plan and inaugurate it. She has given courses in many of the hospitals in and around New York City on Public Health Nursing, and has acted as advisor to many of the nursing settlements in cities and in the rural districts.

John and Albert are the irritating ones; they could play anything they wanted to, piano, violin and flute, and John the banjo (even a funeral march sounded funereal on the banjo when he played it) and sing accurately and pleasantly in choruses and quartets. When John was sick for a year before his death, his greatest pleasure came when he could lie in bed and play his flute. At the same time John was a doctor, and Albert an engineer.

The present generation is not quite so talented as the preceding ones, though it is amazing how the same loves of science and music pop up. I believe that there is only one of Charles Hitchcock's grandchildren alive, and I don't know her, and that there are no Storrs left; so there are not many of us. Edward, the oldest of Edward the Second's grandchildren is able to play at any instrument, and further shows his love for music in that he married an opera singer. Katherine has her talents hidden from me; her musical interest is always there, but so far as I know she plays no instrument at all, and is not interested in Science. Her oldest child, however, is taking up the new science of Photography professionally. Margaret trained for a geologist, and has taught various other sciences, and John is a civil engineer, and like his father, music "comes easy" for him.

As I said at the beginning, I only wanted to trace two traits. Perhaps you will quarrel with me at my choice and say that there are others, more strongly developed





and more interesting; I will admit that two or three extremely strong characteristics are, first the humanitarian turn of mind and interest, secondly, a strong religious interest and belief, and thirdly, a hypochondriacism; and that these can be traced throughout the family; but I have found the two I chose the most interesting. Some day it would be interesting to trace outstanding interests in other Deerfield families, for, while I feel that the Hitchcocks are a remarkably definite and colorful family (being one of them), I have never noticed any lack of these characteristics in other Deerfield families. Could it be the water, or the location that makes us all so "full of character"?

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### THE MISSES ALLEN

Frances Stebbins Allen: Aug. 10, 1854—Feb. 14, 1941

Mary Electa Allen: May 14, 1858—Feb. 18, 1941

BY MARY FIELD FULLER

Very recently Deerfield has lost two of her finest as well as her oldest inhabitants, Frances and Mary Allen. Just four days after Frances, her life-long companion and her constant care for many years, Mary died—her work was done. It had been her fervent prayer that she might not go before Frances, who had become not only wholly deaf but also blind; the only means of communicating with her being by spelling words on an alphabet painted very black on a white glove on her left hand. Frances had soon learned the location of these letters, beginning with the fingertips, then joints of the fingers, and the hand, and downward to the wrist. It was a slow arduous task, yet Mary not only read to her, in this way, the vital news of the day, the progress of the war, news of their friends and their letters; but she read also selected and simplified parts of books and articles and poems. Frances had a marvelous memory and would





soothe her wakeful night hours by repeating poems. She had difficulty in learning Braille but was mastering it. She was wonderfully quick to recognize her friends by touch and to understand what they were trying to spell out, often jumping at their meaning at once.

Both Frances and Mary were women of unusual intelligence and ability. They had great love of nature and all things beautiful, and appreciation for the best in literature, art, and music. They were descended from many of the very oldest settlers of Deerfield, from Stebbinses, Hawks, Dickinsons, Bardwells, and many others, some of whom were captured in the 1704 raid and members of their families killed. The lovely, old house where they lived was a direct inheritance from Thomas Bardwell, who bought it in 1722 from Hannah Beaman, Deerfield's first schoolmistress. Frances and Mary were born and grew up in the old Allen Homestead in Wapping. They attended the Westfield Normal School and were members of a class famous for its accomplished and unusual graduates.

Fanny taught a little school at The Bars, a mile across the meadows, that she loved, from her home. One of her pupils still remembers her as a very pretty girl with a cluster of bright brown curls at her neck and a lovely fair skin. A gentle teacher, even in her fine discipline nothing ever escaped her keen vigilance. She taught also in Whitinsville.

Mary taught French in the old Academy. My first memory of her is as a tall, slender, exquisitely refined girl of nineteen or twenty, standing before our French class in the little room over the front door of Memorial Hall, then called the "Science Room" in 1877. Next I recall her at a party in their cosy, low-ceiled parlor at Wapping, playing accompaniment for her brother Caleb's cornet.

Very early in their young womanhood both became deaf, cutting them off from so much they loved—the songs of birds, the voices of little children, the conversa-





tion of their friends. To the end of their lives they were eagerly interested in all that concerned their family and their friends; they kept complete knowledge of all that was happening in the world.

Both were women of rare intelligence; they were kindly and keen in their judgment and seldom wrong.

After they became deaf they turned to photography, at first as a means of expressing their strong love of beauty. They soon became very skillful and their Deerfield landscapes, chosen with real love of their subjects and true artistic insight, were sought for. They were called upon to illustrate books and articles. Their portrait work attracted many interesting people to sit for them. They established a large and successful business in a quiet, dignified way, and they developed ways of their own that made them well known and greatly admired by other photographers for their original and beautiful effects. Mr. Boyden has been so fortunate as to acquire a complete set of their pictures for the Academy.

Both Frances and Mary had decided literary gifts but were too modest to show their work. A lovely poem of Frances, "Bloodroot," is all we know of their writings. Fanny was an ardent and skillful gardener. It was said of her that she might plant things upside down and they would grow. She planted daffodils along the borders and paths of their place in such profusion that the spot became noted for its beauty in early May. Under the south windows of the house she planted lovely primroses in great varieties, lilies of the valley, violets, and hyacinths, and she loved to linger there even when she could no longer see, sometimes kneeling beside them for their fragrance.

Loyal, devoted friends they were; helpful, loving Aunts to many nieces and nephews.





## INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS OF COLRAIN

BY KATHERINE HOLTON CRAM

When Boston Township, No. 2, was thrown open for settlement in 1738 and fifty lots were laid out for sale, it was no accident that they were all bought by Scotch Irish Presbyterians. Many of these people were of the exodus from Ireland in 1720, some were their children, and others came later. Some had lived in Londonderry, N. H., and neighboring towns, some in Boston, Stow, Worcester, Shrewsbury, Holden, Sudbury, and Hatfield since their arrival in America.

In New Hampshire their numbers had outgrown the land allotted to them, and through the elapsing years became too crowded for further settlement to advantage. Those attempting to join the Massachusetts settlements had found no pleasant home anywhere. They were looked down upon by the English settlers as "wild Irish," and their religion was almost as irritating to the Puritans as the Catholic or Quaker beliefs.

In Worcester, while taxed for church dues, they were not allowed to use the church to hear one of their own preachers; and when, at great sacrifice, they built a church of their own, the Congregationalists pulled it down in the night.

The opening of a new settlement in the hills offered a home to these sturdy, dissatisfied people; and they gladly sold what they had acquired in the towns which had proved no home to them, and eagerly took up the lots in No. 2. They moved there as soon as possible, naming their own town Colrain for the town in northern Ireland where many of them had lived.

During the first years they were busy building houses for their families, shelter for their stock, cutting brush





and clearing the land, plowing and sowing to raise crops to feed their families. As soon as possible they built a Presbyterian church and had a pastor of their faith. They built a road from the hill by way of what is known as Handy's Lane, at the northern edge of the Kemp and Fairbanks farm, over to the Copeland place where Matthew Clark had settled, and over the hill down to Green River where they could reach a road to Deerfield. This was the first road built in Colrain to lead to another town; it was in constant use for years, and still may be used. Over this road the settlers took their grain to Deerfield until James Breakenridge built a grist-mill on the Branch, on the site of the present "Red Mill." It is uncertain how long this mill was in use. It was burned by the Indians, and Breakenridge did not rebuild, but sold his lot and removed to Bennington, Vt.

Almost all of the settlers had some trade besides farming. A number of them were listed as weavers, and they worked for themselves and their neighbors. Lieut. James Stewart was famous as a penman, and taught a writing school to which pupils came from neighboring towns. He served as one of the early town clerks, and his records still exist, as clear and legible as when he wrote them. One of the settlers is listed as a wig maker, but whether he found a use for his trade in his new home is not told us. There were brick layers, masons and carpenters among these men who were of great use in the new town. John Pennell, who was among the more prosperous men, built a fairly large house just north of the present Apt place, and kept a tavern and a small store. Somebody had a cooper shop, as there is record of a woman leaving home to go to one who was never seen again. She was supposed to have been taken by Indians.

By the time these people had homes, a church and roads built, and their farms under cultivation, the Indian raids began and the settlers had to build Forts Morris and Lucas on the hill and Fort Morrison on the river. These offered some protection, but life was very unsafe,





and for long years fighting Indians was a major occupation.\*

When the Indian wars were over more settlers came to Colrain. A notable group were the five families from Woodstock, Conn., who were related to each other by ties of blood or marriage, and who bought adjoining farms between present Lyonsville and the Shelburne line. The heads of these families were Hezekiah Smith, Moses Johnson, John Call, Ephraim Manning, and Thomas Fox. They had secured very good land which they farmed, but they also had other trades and occupations.

Hezekiah Smith was a man of affairs who understood common law and proper methods of doing business. He had been an important man in Woodstock, and he continued to be in Colrain. Thomas Fox built the house which still stands near the mouth of Fox brook, and opened the "Fox and Goose Tavern." He had mills on the brook near his house, a grist mill, saw mill, a cider mill and no doubt a distillery.

The first road from the Scotch Irish settlement to this part of the town was built over the hill to Thomas Fox's. The Fox house was for many years the home of Mrs. Pike, who lived to be over 100 years old and was a real daughter of the Revolution, and of her granddaughter Miss Dora Daniels. Ephraim Manning was a worker in iron and brass. Moses Johnson's sons Isaac and Lemuel had a sawmill on the river, and so did a man named Hollister.

In 1814 Warren King and Isaac Johnson built the first cotton mill on the river, on the east bank, and Isaac Johnson started the first Sunday School in town. King and Johnson sold to Calvin Shattuck of Leyden, and in the flood of '69 his mill was swept away. He then rebuilt on the west bank. After his death it became the Field

\* This part of Colrain has been mostly given over to farming, fruit-raising, and cattle breeding. In later years Copeland's Holsteins were famous, and the fine apple and peach orchards made many farmers prosperous people.





and Cannedy Massamet Yarn Company. When this business ceased to pay the mill was closed and the machinery sold. After a time the mill was torn down, and another industry had vanished.

Perhaps of all the group of settlers from Woodstock none of them personified industry as did John Call. His diary is still in existence, and one of his descendants in Exeter, N. H., has an exact copy, which I have read. He set down his day's work, the money he received and paid, the births of his children and the death of his mother-in-law, which he seemed to regret. He was an expert in his lines of work. He was a good teamster, and not only used his horses for himself and neighbors, but during the Revolution he teamed supplies from Albany to Ticonderoga while they were needed, and never missed a trip or lost a cargo. His neighbor, Major Hezekiah Smith and three sons were defending Ticonderoga at this time.

When teaming was not needed, John Call was an expert weaver, and his diary lists many blankets, yards of cloth and flannel which he wove to order.

He was also an expert cobbler, and made boots and shoes for whole families. One entry in his diary is payment by Hezekiah Smith for boots and shoes for his large family. With the help of his sons he carried on his farm and seems to have enjoyed his busy life. Some have credited him with a mill also, but he does not mention that in his diary, and I think that must apply to his son, John Call, Jr. This Woodstock group were all Baptists, and until they could get a Baptist church built they had to travel to Ashfield for means of Grace, but they had a church in Colrain as soon as a few more Baptist families moved to town.

Quite a different group settled on Catamount Hill. These people were mostly Reformed Methodists as to religion, and were divided in politics. The men on Catamount cleared farms and raised what they could. For as long as it was profitable the men had charcoal pits; they cut lumber and sold it, and a man named Smith at one





time had a store on the hill top near the Stacy Stetson farm. When he received a consignment of new goods he would take the old dinner horn out and blow it toward the four points of the compass. Those who heard it sent on the good news by the grapevine telegraph, which has always worked so well in Colrain, and as soon as possible customers began to arrive. Certainly that style of advertising has been lost to us.

The Catamount legends of industry are more about their women than men. Perhaps the most historic piece of work ever done in Colrain was when Mrs. Rhoda Shippee, Mrs. Lois Shippee, Mrs. Sophis Willis and Mrs. Stephen Hale made the first American flag ever raised over a school house in the United States. It was raised by Paul Davenport and Amasa Shippee and other loyal residents of Catamount Hill in the presence of an enthusiastic crowd of sympathizers.

Mrs. Rhoda Shippee was a notable woman of great strength and quickness of motion—she was famed for her ability as a housewife and nurse, and is said to have traveled to her neighbors on snow shoes to give them needed help. Perhaps her most famous exploit was the speed with which she produced a pair of trousers for her husband. When he came home and told her he had enlisted for the War of 1812 she went out and clipped fleece from a black sheep and a white one: she carded the wool by hand and spun it on her old wheel, wove it on a hand loom and cut and made the trousers before her husband left for Boston next day. She had no dark thread, so she drew white thread over the bottom of the dinner pot till it was black enough for her purpose. This seems to us an incredible story, but it was well attested by her neighbors, who were reliable people. That it was not an impossible or unheard of feat is shown by an account of a New Hampshire woman who had to do practically the same task in the same length of time, but history says nothing about her having to color her thread.

At one time fifty families lived on Catamount and





maintained a school and religious services, but now I do not know that any family lives on the hill the year around, and most of the old houses are gone.

Before the Revolution Christian Hill had been partly settled by younger sons of the Scotch Irish families who held second division grants in the northern part of the town; as David Wilson, son of Deacon James Wilson, who settled on the hill which still bears his name, and the Pennell sons, who on the death of their father sold his tavern and lot to John Wood, while they remained on Christian Hill. Other settlers there and on Catamount had been crowded out of Vermont by the conflicting claims of New York and New Hampshire.\* Settlers who had bought their land and paid their money to one state found a purchaser from the other in possession; and they could not secure a title to the land nor get back their money. Halifax and Guilford were bitter battle-grounds in this conflict, and some of the dispossessed were glad to take refuge over the Massachusetts line in Colrain.

The business on Christian Hill could only be farming, and the men had a hard time clearing the ground—it was much harder here than in the southern part of the town and in the valleys, but the people got a living, built comfortable homes, a school, and a church where preaching is maintained to the present time. The people were isolated from the rest of the town and went to Halifax to trade—what little they could afford to do.

In a very old history I found the story of three women on Christian Hill in the early days who owned one darning needle in common. They used it in turn, with its time of use carefully figured; and they were all most scrupulous in not keeping it beyond the allotted time, lest one of the others would not get her mending done before Saturday night. No woman ever treasured diamonds with greater care or suffered more anxiety about them than these women in their care for their wonderful

\* See P.V.M.A., vol. VI, page 231.





needle. One woman was a Gault and one a Pennell. The names are gone from the town now except the corrupted remembrance in the name of Pannel Hill, which was once "Pennell."

The Burringtons and Sanders came up from Rhode Island with other families, and the hill was closely settled for a time. The population is sadly decreased, but there are still good farms on Christian Hill and the Franklin Forestry Company carries on an industry to the present time.

One of the earliest industries in town was the keeping of taverns, and with that went cider mill and distilleries for brandy and rum. One of the Donelson family had a distillery on Wilson Hill. Before the Revolution Thomas Cochran and his sons, Robert and John, came up from Pelham and built quite a large tavern at what is now Colrain village, on the site of Mrs. Walter A. Thompson's house. At the time this was not a good location, as the road from the mountain met the river road above the present village at Nye's ford and the river road continued to the Red Mill on the northern band of the river. Just above this junction was the tavern of Matthew Donelson.

Perhaps the Cochrans had foreseen a change when roads would cross where they built, but this did not develop in their time, and for that reason or others they left Colrain for Bennington, Vt., where they did good service in the Revolution, and prospered. They were before their time in Colrain. During the bitter years after the Revolution the population of Colrain increased rapidly, till between 1800 and 1810 it had the largest population of any town in the present Franklin County, and it did not begin to fall till after the Civil War.

The reason for the rush to settle even the wildest parts of the town is no longer apparent except in flood times. One cannot imagine now the water power which rushed down not only the river but the mountain brooks, now so nearly dry except in spring. Many residents of the





longer settled parts of New England had been ruined by the war and heavy taxes, and were forced to sell their properties to enable them to save any part of it. The industrious men with trades hastened to find new homes where land was cheap and water power free. Industries sprang up along the river and its branches.

About 1795 Edward Adams with his sons Edward, Jr., Eliphalet and John settled at the site on the Branch which still bears their name. At Adamsville they built a tavern and the usual distillery, potash works, and also mills for fulling cloth and grinding corn. After the passing of the Adams family John Wilson ran the tavern and post office for many years. Fifty years ago the tavern was closed and the industries were gone except Fred Kendrick's sawmill and lumber yard.

The first telephones in town were put in by the old Heath Company and the central office was at Adamsville with Mrs. Hattie Kendrick as operator. When the Heath Company sold out to the New England Telephone Company the central office was moved to Colrain village.

There were for many years a blacksmith shop at Adamsville and a store, there no longer.

Other settlers in this locality were the Blandings on what was later the Edwin Cobb farm. They ran the farm, raised neat stock and ran a sawmill. They were prosperous people, but moved west in the fifties. There were industries in the Churchill district, and over the hill from there was a lively little hamlet, called "Gimletville," where they made gimlets and small tools. Another industry of this region was wooden ware—two mills made brooms, chopping trays, wooden bowls, ox yokes, lather boxes, rolling pins, etc.

One of these mills was run by Thomas White and his three sons, Thomas, John and Luke: and they spent their summers farming, and winters in the shop. Old White had a milch cow which he had broken to a handmade rope harness and to draw a light cart. Every spring





when roads were settled White loaded the cart with their winter's production, hitched in the cow and started out about town to sell to whoever would buy. He was fond of bread and milk, so, night and morning he would milk the cow, buying bread of convenient neighbors and so feast himself. He disposed of the surplus milk to whoever could use it. He is said to have returned home from these trips with goods sold and with no loss from hotel bills, transportation or advertising. Old White and his cow are among Colrain traditions.

Major Smith Pierce had a sawmill near the White's, and there is mention of a second blacksmith shop, a turning mill, gristmill, carding mill and wagon and sleigh manufactory in this region; and on Taylor brook were two sawmills, a blacksmith shop and tannery, though the workers' names are not recorded.

Barnabas Porter, who lived in this vicinity, grew the first Porter apple, to which he gave his name, and he brought the first Baldwin grafts into town. Fruit trees were first grafted in Colrain in 1798. Small villages once stood in these localities, but now, except at Adamsville, there are only scattered houses here and there and the busy places of old are marked by half-filled cellar holes and in spring by flowering lilac bushes. There was an article in this year's town warrant asking for a vote to decide upon what shall be done with the Churchill school house. This, too, is a vanished industry.

One of the most important industrialists of that period after the Revolution was Jesse Lyons who came to Colrain from Hingham, where he had learned the cabinet maker's trade, and he started business in that part of Colrain which still bears his name. He either built or enlarged the Arthur Smith house at Lyonsville and kept a tavern there, and he also had a cider mill and brandy distillery. For his real business he built a shop across the street, which is now a double dwelling house, and in that shop he made coffins and beautiful furniture. Many pieces of Lyons furniture still remain in town and others





are scattered through the country, still highly prized for their design and craftsmanship.

The carving in the Willis house and in the Gilderdale house on Christian Hill was done by him; but the one great work of his, remaining in town today, is the beautiful pulpit in the Colrain Congregationalist church from which Priest Taggart preached the funeral eulogy of George Washington at the time of his death. The pulpit then stood in a church on North River above the village, but when the present church was completed the pulpit was not thought good enough to grace the new edifice and was placed in the town hall where it served eighty years as a moderator's desk. In 1902, when the first Old Home celebration was held, visitors of discernment discovered the beauty of the old pulpit and called to it the attention of the late Lorenzo Griswold, who at his own expense had the pulpit properly restored and placed in the church where it was rededicated to its proper use. Many people go to see it every year.

At Lyonsville also Moses Howard had his shoe shop, and it is probable that a man named Taylor built the Joseph Clark house and had a harness business there. He certainly had the harness shop and later sold the place to Dr. George Winslow who seems to have lacked a sense of humor, for, besides practicing his profession he opened a marble shop. At least, it was not tactful for a doctor to practice medicine and at the same time sell gravestones.

Ignatius Perkins started a small business at the Foundry village in 1841 making wagon shafts, and later moved to the Willis Place where he made sleighs, wagons and clapboards and had a very successful business. He built the house at Griswoldville where the late Lorenzo Griswold lived so many years and which since his death was torn down. On the death of Perkins his son James took over the business, but failed. It was sold to Ansel C. Smith who carried on for a few years till he retired to go into the store at Colrain village with his son





Henry. About 1863 Joseph Griswold bought this property and put up a cotton mill.

Another man, prominent in both town and industry was Major Daniel Willis who came from Sudbury and built a mill and fine brick house at the place which still bears his name. In his mill he manufactured clothing and was most successful. Some of his descendants were among Colrain's most useful and prominent citizens. After his passing the mill was used for a time as a turning mill before Joseph Griswold bought the whole property.

Cooking stoves came into use in 1814 and iron plows in 1824, and Colrain made them both. Joseph Davenport, son of Elder Edward Davenport, built a foundry at the place which is still called Foundryville. He was joined by George Hastings of Heath in partnership. After a few years Davenport sold out his share to Waitstill Hasting of Charlemont and went to Hartford. The Hastings carried on for a time, I do not know how long. A man in Ashfield owns a plow at the present time which has their name stamped upon it. In 1850 the foundry was run by Solomon Gleason who later sold out to Ariel Thomas of Heath who carried on the work till the foundry was swept away by the flood of '69, after which it was not rebuilt. Thomas was the inventor and maker of a remarkable side hill plow which was in great demand; he made box stoves, cook stoves and fire frames, one of which at least is still in use in the home of George E. Clark.

Daniel Newton had a shop near the foundry where pitchforks, shovels, carriage bows, shafts and hubs were made; and in the York house, now owned by Earl M. Nichols, Messinger and Stacy manufactured boots and shoes and kept a small stock of footwear on hand for local sale.

W. W. Cary, whose home was at the Foundry village and who was the father of the late Whiting Cary, was greatly interested in bees and built up a very successful





apiary. Reverend Lorenzo L. Langstroth\* came to work with him and together they invented the Langstroth hive which marked a great advance in bee culture. Mr. Cary is said to have imported the first Italian queen bee and he made several successful experiments which were adopted by other bee men, and he was famous among bee men of that day.

They also started a cider mill, and in later years that was carried on by Herbert Cary and the apiary by Earl M. Nichols, son-in-law of Whiting Cary; but on the death of Mr. Herbert Cary the apiary was given up and the Cary bees and honey vanished, while Mr. Nichols carried on the cider business and still does. They make every year a large amount of cider and cider vinegar, the latter of such quality that it has been used by the Food and Drug department of the U. S. Bureau of Chemistry as a standard for testing other vinegars. The cider and vinegar factory is all that remains of the industries of Foundryville.

Before industry started in Colrain village it was thriving from the state line southward. At the Starks place, which was then thought to stand exactly across the state line, half in Colrain and half in Halifax, the Starks for two generations sold liquor, and performed marriage ceremonies as justices of the peace. People thought they evaded the law by going from the north end of the house into the south to leave Vermont, and from the southern rooms to the northern to leave Massachusetts. The old squires did a thriving industry, both in liquor and weddings; but long after the old squires were dead and the place had become a plain farm house the state line was run again and did not go through the house at all, but between the house and barn: the house was entirely in Vermont.

Just below the state line and wholly in Colrain was a busy saw mill and also a tannery. Thoroughly tanned

\* "Langstroth, who invented the movable frame properly so called": Maeterlinck. Author, 1853, of "The Honey Bee." translated into French; still the standard work. Notes on L.L.L. are in P.V.M.A. files. Editor.





leather was in great demand, cow hide boots and shoes being foot protectors the year around, and farmers from adjoining towns patronized these Colrain tanneries to secure a supply of leather against the annual visit of the cobbler. On Shepardson brook E. C. Harris had a mill for making clapboards, and between the state line and Elm Grove were Moore's sash and blind works and Parsons and Athertin's tannery. Before Colrain village came to life Elm Grove was a very prosperous little village. There Loren McCulloch had his plow works, Ezra Plumb a mill for wool carding; there was Taylor's tannery and Smead's sash and blind shop. The people there had a school, a post office and two doctors,—all before Colrain village started.

Between Elm Grove and Colrain village was the tavern of Matthew Donelson; and after his day the place was owned by the Dennison brothers, Major David and H. B. Dennison. They built a dam across the river near their home, had a saw and grist mill and made ox bows and yokes, farmed extensively and were the largest wool growers in town.

Colrain village, or "the City," as it was known, did not get started till about 1800 or later, when the roads were changed and the road to Lyonsville ran on the south bank of the river along the stretch, between Colrain and the Willis place, where the river runs from east to west. A road had been built down the mountain where the present road lies and met the river road as now, at the foot of the hill. Thomas Miller, son of William, was first to see the advantage of the new cross roads and took down a small tavern in the east part of the town, transported the timbers to the new location and built the first tavern at Colrain City. He also built a store where the town building stands, and potash works near by. The little hill leading down onto River street still bears the unromantic name of Potash Hill.

Miller did a very good business between tavern, store and potash works. He often took his pay in barter for





produce which he could use or sell again. He died when comparatively a young man and the tavern was taken over by Thomas Wiswell Thompson and his brother Hollis, and for many years the hotel was in the hands of some of the Thompson family who enlarged and improved it. The last of the Thompsons to run the hotel was Sally, the daughter of Wiswell Thompson, and her husband, General Orrin Gaines. I do not know where the latter got his military title, but he was always known as "the General." Mrs. Gaines was famous for her good cooking, and both she and her husband famed for their hospitality and good cheer. There are people still living who remember "the General" and Aunt Sally with affection. P. T. Barnum ate dinner there in their day, and assured them it was the best dinner he had eaten in forty years. He found no humbug about Aunt Sally's cooking.

The old hotel burned in 1886 and the Gaines retired to private life. Another hotel built by Ansel Smith on that site was run by various people till it burned in 1896, when C. J. Russell was proprietor. A third hotel was erected on the same site and is still there. In early days Robert McClellan kept a tavern in the Cochran house, but was not very successful and the house passed into the possession of Isaac Barber who was the first lawyer in town;\* and the house was always known thereafter as the Barber house, though it was later owned by Lucius Lyons who kept tavern for a while and then built the house over into apartments. In the south-eastern corner, facing the common, George Russell had a tailor shop and employed several women to work for him. The widow of Lucius Lyons, and afterward their daughter, Mrs. Antes (Lyons) Spurr lived in one apartment and rented the others till the house burned in 1895. Mrs. Spurr then built a smaller house on the same site, now owned by Mrs. Walter A. Thompson.

About 1830 Solomon Sykes and Asaph Snow began

\* Isaac Barber was the first register of probate and a captain in the War of 1812. See P.V.M.A., VII.





the manufacture of wagons and sleighs in a shop where the Ansel Smith house stands, next the Congregational church, and Sykes built the house on the river known as the Dean house, from its long occupation by Dr. Christopher Deane. It is now the home of Frederick Call. About this time David Fox built the house now occupied by Patrick Looman and Hubert Mockler and families, and below the house on the road built a shop for the making of felt hats. When this industry passed a man named Tanner bought the shop and made it into a dwelling house which his daughter-in-law, Mrs. Abbie Tanner occupied for many years. She is remembered for her quaint habit of always standing when she had callers and for her happy celebration of her golden wedding many years after her husband had died. She sensibly remarked to a criticising neighbor—"Well, it was my wedding and I am not dead."

The father of Henry and Jesse Dewey of Griswoldville for years had a blacksmith shop across the road from his house just above the Tanner house. He was famous for his skill in shoeing oxen. The McGee house, built across the brook, had a cooper's shop in the north end, while the family occupied the rest of the house. During the 1850's carriage and sleigh building was carried on by Oscar Weatherhead and Joseph Lyons, and they were succeeded by Winchester and Weatherhead, Ralph Childs and H. H. Winchester and Sons.

After the manufacture of carriages and sleighs ceased in town they were still needed, and John D. Miller and Charles A. Marcy formed a partnership for their sale and built a warehouse adjoining the Miller home. After Mr. Miller's death Mr. Marcy carried on the business till the demand was greater for automobiles and trucks. Mr. Marcy then closed out his carriage business and sold automobiles for some years. In early years a cobbler's shop stood where John Pitt's house now stands and was torn down when Orson Curtis built the Pitt house. A very old blacksmith shop stood for many years on the





site of Call's garage, and below the Dean house was a shoe shop which was carried away by the flood of '69, which took not only the shop but all the land on which it stood.

The Congregationalist church was, after long and fierce battles, finally built at the village on its present site and the Methodist church was built a few years later: the "City" was on its way up.

Clark Chandler, who had built a store on the mountain in 1781 and had been very successful there, saw that trade would now go to the valley, as the churches and town hall had centered there; and he built a store at the village on the corner where the mountain road joins the river road, opposite the present town building. A store was maintained on that corner for many years, but that and the adjoining building which was once Marcy's carriage and auto repository have all been built over into apartments. About 1812 Samuel Coolidge built the brick store, and some years later the house now occupied by the Colrain post office, opposite the hotel. A young lawyer came to town about the same time and built a brick office next the church; the little building which served many years, after lawyers had vanished from the town, as a meat market and now that too is a vanished industry.

Before the civil war Philo Marsh had a tin shop in the village, made all sorts of kitchen and farm ware and sent out tin peddlers to the surrounding country to sell the goods and buy rags. Everybody kept a rag-bag in those days and saved every scrap of cloth and paper. Charles A. Marcy and William H. Donelson began their careers as tin peddlers; another vanished industry, for tin ware and tin carts are seen no more. Mr. Marcy was proud of his early days and I have heard him describe some of his experiences as he traveled the roads from North Adams to Templeton as well as in other directions. One of the tricks of the trade he thought amusing. He carried a supply of heavy glass tumblers for sale and acquired the





knack of throwing them across a kitchen floor without breaking them. He said he broke plenty learning the right throw to do the trick, but he made up his losses by his large sales of "unbreakable glass" to housewives impressed by the tumbler-throwing trick. I asked if they ever discovered they would break unless he did the throwing and he laughed and said, "Probably, but they never complained."

In time Mr. Marcy was able to buy out Marsh, and for years he had a flourishing tin shop to which he added plumbing and the sale of household goods. He employed an expert tinner, Albert Smead who for years made tin ware and mended it and every winter made a supply of syrup cans for local use. Mr. Marcy also engaged in the insurance business and real estate, loaned money on good security, was interested in lumbering operations and, as I have said, sold wagons, sleighs and automobiles. These last occupations took so much of his time that many years ago he sold his shop and tin and plumbing business to C. J. Carpenter. Carpenter and his son carried on for years, but now they have closed the shop and carry on their work from their own home.

The farmers once raised stock for meat and sold to Patrick Looman at the City and to Ross Purrington at Shattuckville who killed and dressed their own meat, made lard, salt pork and corned beef and we cannot buy the same kind today. Among the busy people of the village many years ago were the two brothers who came from Arlington, Vt. Shubal Buck was a builder of mills and he certainly found a town to give him work: he was the father of the late Mrs. Elias Bardwell and Miss Adelaide Buck. His brother, Roswell, was both a house and wagon builder. David Fisk was a house and carriage painter of famed skill.

Between Colrain village and the Willis place, at comparatively an early date after the beginning of the village, Robert McClellan and Samuel Peck built a paper mill, but it never paid the cost of construction and that





vanished. A mill which stood nearer the Willis place was used by various men for different purposes; nothing very definite is recorded except that at one time it was used by Hugh Bolton Miller, but the industry he conducted is not named.

Griswoldville began to live at about the time of the beginning of Colrain City. Joseph Griswold of Buckland settled there in 1830 and built himself a home and a shop for making doors, window sash and blinds. The following year he added the making of lather boxes and still later of gimlets and augers. He was a hard-working man and never spared himself, and could accomplish in a day more than any two or three men he could hire. He is said to have shingled his barn in one day without help, laying 7000 shingles.

About 1832 he decided to manufacture cotton goods and built a small mill with 16 looms, and later built a brick mill with 144 looms. The first mill was destroyed by fire in 1851 and the second in 1856.

In the year 1846 Mr. Griswold opened a commission house in New York and a model farm in Stonington, Conn., where his family lived for about six years while he carried on his manufacturing at the same time. In 1852 he moved back to Colrain and rebuilt his burned mill. In 1855 he became interested in agriculture and bought up several farms on Christian hill and other localities. The one on Christian hill is now the site of the Franklin Forestry Company's plantations. In 1856 Mr. Griswold rebuilt his second mill, which started in 1858 with 210 looms. In 1865 he bought the Willis place property and built a new cotton mill there and took into partnership his three sons, Ethan, Joseph, Jr. and Lorenzo. In 1879 he added the mills at Turners Falls to his operations.

Proper credit should be given to this man's industry, which was phenomenal. In his building operations the timber was cut on his own land and prepared in his own saw mills; sand and clay from his own property formed





the bricks he used and they were baked under his own supervision. He founded a large and prosperous business to leave to his children and it remained in the Griswold family a hundred years. For many years they manufactured sorbent gauze for hospitals and cheese cloth. The business was sold to the Kendall Company in June, 1932, and today not a Griswold is left in Colrain.

I think this completes the special industries of Colrain as far as I have been able to trace them, but there were general industries carried on all over town—agriculture, fruit growing, wool growing, cattle raising, tobacco growing and general cereal crops and flax; and some of these industries still survive. Hard times hit Colrain in 1837. It was during that decade that the mulberry craze spread over the country and was eagerly welcomed by many people as a means of relieving their financial difficulties. Mulberry trees were set out on many farms and with great hope the people undertook the culture of silk worms, but the enterprise was a failure and was abandoned by 1839. The last I knew one lone mulberry tree was still growing on the Cromack farm on Franklin hill—a memorial to buried hopes and a lost industry.

Before the railroad reached Greenfield staging and teaming were active industries of Colrain. Cheapside was then a sort of sea port, and boats brought goods up the Deerfield river, landing them there and teams went down from the hill towns to get the goods billed to their towns. Joseph B. Clark has left an account of the days when he brought goods from Cheapside, flour from Springfield and occasionally made trips to Boston and back. Many young men were employed in this way. From the time the railroad reached Greenfield till it was brought to Shelburne Falls a daily stage ran from Colrain to Greenfield over the mountain and back. For many years Lysander Brownell drove this stage, bringing the mail, passengers, luggage and parcels. After the railroad reached Shelburne Falls a stage went down twice a day and returned until the electric road was built





in 1896. There were also stages to Adamsville, Heath and Jacksonville, Vt.

The coming and going of stages was of great interest to the people of the town fifty years ago, and I remember well the custom they had of going to bed as soon as the nine o'clock mail was in and distributed. It was a very lonesome custom to people coming there to live who were used to later hours. On every evening except Saturday a look around the village at 9.30 in the evening would show every house except the doctor's in darkness, or, perhaps a light shone where there was illness or the home of Mrs. Spurr who had decided on that time to paper a room or paint furniture. She was entirely deaf; and while she enjoyed company and could read lips perfectly, she could not work if she was interrupted, so she often chose late evening for her many occupations.

The Colrain electric road was built in 1896 and the first time it was used it was to carry voters to the November election. There had been a previous celebration by town officials and officers of the road and invited guests, and it was a great day for the town. The road for many years was both useful and pleasant for the people. It carried the mails for those years and did a large freighting business, and it carried many thousands of barrels of apples out of town. The increase in motor cars and trucks ruined the freight business and injured the passenger service till it was no longer a paying concern and was finally abandoned. The tracks were torn up when the new state road was built about ten years ago.

The electric road was greatly missed and nothing really has taken its place. It was a kindly, personal, informal road; the same men worked on it for years and knew everybody and everybody knew them. Conrad Sauter drove the first car into town and the last one out. All the employees were kind and neighborly. You could send any sort of errand by them and have it properly done; if you were not quite ready when the car came along they would wait for you to finish dressing and get





on your hat and then make up the time. When you came home from a railroad trip one of them would be sure to meet you at the train and take your luggage to the car; and if your train was late and they knew you were coming on it they would hold the car a reasonable time.

When the electric road vanished and the workers scattered Colrain lost something comfortable that has never come again. Now an automobile brings the mail from Shelburne Falls to Shattuckville, Griswoldville, Lyonsville and Colrain, and R.F.D. carriers carry the mail from Griswoldville and Colrain to the outlying farms. There is still a star route stage which runs from Jacksonville, Vermont, to Colrain and back—the last of Colrain stages.

At the Red mill on the branch the late Fred W. Purrington carried on a successful manufactory of boxes, and his mill furnished power for the first electric lights in Colrain. They were on till midnight, but at that time Mr. Purrington turned off the power and went home to bed. If anyone was giving a party, or there was a public occasion warranting the concession, he would keep on till 1 o'clock, but no later; and he sometimes forgot his agreement. Imagine a room full of guests playing whist or partaking of refreshments and without warning the rooms plunged in deepest darkness; imagine the wild scramble in the dark for lamps and the apologies to guests! It was one of the problems of entertaining in those days which I remember acutely.

About forty years ago a small arts and crafts society flourished at the City and what they lacked in numbers they made up in industry and effort. One man did oil and water color painting, tooled leather and did pyrography; some of the women worked at the last two occupations and also did raffia weaving, basket making, photography, chair caning and embroidery. The club lived but a few years and was more fun than art, but the members worked hard while it lasted.

The extension service has organized many groups of





workers to make gowns, hats, etc., and also hooked rugs.

This brings us to the work the women of Colrain have accomplished in 200 years, and for which I would like to give them credit. Of course they have done their share from the first in the usual work of frontier women, house keeping, child bearing and raising, sewing, mending, cooking, cleaning, spinning, weaving—few of these women ever failed in these things, but many of them did more. During the French and Indian and the Revolutionary wars when the men were away fighting the women and children did the necessary farm work. In days of peace they made beautiful quilts set with fine needlework; they knit all the stockings for their families and they wove bedspreads, table linen, towels and other articles.

When Colrain held its first Old Home celebration, which lasted three days, the town hall was arranged like a colonial home and treasures brought from all over town to furnish it. In the exhibit were numerous bedspreads, woven in blue and white or in red and white patterns; bedspreads tufted in elaborate patterns with candle wicking; gorgeous quilts quilted in elaborate patterns with fine stitches; embroidered samplers; hand woven tablecloths and napkins and towels; braided and hooked rugs; netted valences for high post beds; crocheted lace and beautiful knitting. Everyone who saw the display wondered how those women with large families and so much house work, and no artificial light but candles and whale oil lamps, ever accomplished the really fine work shown there.

I think Colrain women have always been fine cooks. There is a story that when Amasa Shippee was invited to Major Smith Pierce's to a husking he sent word he would come if "Aunt Liddy" (Mrs. Pierce), would make him a pumpkin pie on a stone boat. When supper was served he called for his pie and Mrs. Pierce brought in one baked on an immense platter several feet in circumference. Mrs. Pierce said to Mr. Shippee, "You





know, sir, that the Major does not keep his stone boat clean enough for baking pies, neither would my oven hold one, but perhaps you can make this pie do." Mr. Shippee thought he could.

Mrs. Pierce's sister, Betsy Blandin, was famous for her wedding cakes and bride loaves; and she was often called upon to use her skill, for not only friends and neighbors but for people at a distance who longed for a Blandin cake to grace their wedding festivities. Girls and women not needed at home often went to assist families where an emergency called, if there were not enough strong women there to do all the work. No one thought less of them and their social standing remained the same. The wages for such household help ran from fifty cents to \$1.25 per week with board, but the higher price was thought excessive.

At one period it was a popular industry for women to braid hats. Dealers brought loads of palm leaf to the houses and left as much as could be used before the hats were collected. The pay was six cents for a boy's hat and eight cents for a man's; and the price of the palm leaf was from ten to fifteen cents per pound, to be paid for in hats. Sometimes the palm leaf was very poor, and sometimes worthless. An expert could braid from six to ten hats per day and a pound of good leaf would provide material for six or seven hats. This would seem a hard bargain now, but at that some unscrupulous dealers would wet the leaf to increase its weight and the water had to be paid for.

When the traders came for their hats they brought a supply of cheap goods—cheap cloth, hair combs and a variety of brass and fire-gilt jewelry. The braiders were urged to buy and, far from stores, they were tempted. If anything was due them after paying for their leaf and purchases it was a time for rejoicing, for perhaps a dollar had been received in cash. Somebody made money, but not the women. Sometimes they had a bee, and perhaps 25 women would meet at some home and spend the





day together and each strive to outdo the others by the number of hats they could braid during the allotted time. It is recorded that at one such bee they finished 110 hats. When the braiding was over they had dinner together and in the evening the men came for games, cider and popcorn and to escort the ladies home. I suppose the "bee" system accounts for much of the old beautiful work. A day taken off in which the women worked together, with perhaps the men carrying on work of their own outside, accomplished many a task that would have taken too long alone.

The women made the butter and cheese and cared for the poultry until a late period, and if their husbands were very generous and broadminded they allowed their wives the butter and egg proceeds for spending money, but not all husbands were that generous. A very old lady told me many years ago that when she was married her husband agreed to let her have that money, and did for some years. When her eldest child wanted to take music lessons she found where she could buy a secondhand organ for a moderate price and made her arrangements to buy it, and to that end denied herself everything she could and saved her money till the amount was secured.

Unfortunately, when the next trip to town came a neighbor wanted to go with her husband and she had to stay home; so, with perfect trust in her husband she gave him the money, told him where to find the organ and waited all day for it to be brought home. Her husband came, but not the organ. She asked about it and he said, "Do you think I would spend all that money on an organ? I bought a calf with it." "But," she stammered, "the money was mine." He said, "Not at all, the money was mine." She said she ran out in the woods and laid all night behind a log, praying to die. It was not so much the money as the new light she had on her husband's mind. He was a good man, admired and trusted by his neighbors for his integrity, but she realized then that his wife was not included in his fair dealing. She did not die,





but lived long years after the death of her husband and to the last she felt the bitterness of her lost faith in her husband. Life was not easy for women then and no matter how hard they worked they were still dependent on some man's good will.

Women in those days were usually good nurses and always willing to go to a neighbor in an emergency. Later women who could be spared from home earned money by caring for the sick. Fifty years ago there were a dozen women in Colrain who could be secured for practical home nursing. Seven dollars a week was considered very good pay, and these women often not only cared for the sick, but did the housework also. Their work was good, as I know by experience. A good American girl could then be found to do housework and cooking from two to three dollars per week, according to the capabilities of the girl and the size of the household; and a woman could be hired by the day or hour to come in to wash, clean house or other work for ten cents per hour.

One hard working woman of Colrain has been well remembered. This was Louisa Dennison Griswold, wife of Joseph of Griswoldville. He had nothing to beat his wife in the way of industry and endurance. She was the mother of thirteen children, six of whom lived to maturity. She was a famous housekeeper and a gracious hostess, and she not only attended to her own work but was of great assistance to her husband in many of his ventures. She was a kind neighbor, visiting and helping the sick or those in trouble; when anyone was ill or unhappy they went to or sent for Mrs. Griswold. Among her other activities she made 300 pounds of maple sugar from the trees around her house. I have heard her son, Lorenzo, say that he would never allow his wife to work as his mother did.

Both men and women usually worked at sugar making, and in the early days sugar was made on every farm where there was a sugar bush. Every housekeeper expected to have on hand tubs of soft maple sugar, to use





in her cooking to save store sugar and molasses. It was used to sweeten pies and mincemeat and melted to syrup to serve with griddle cakes. Old recipes call for maple syrup in cakes, cookies and puddings; and most of those eatables were delicious but it is long since maple sugar was used much for cooking, and comparatively few of the farmers make sugar now. Years ago Mr. Benjamin Miller invented "maple cream" and had a large sale for it. The Apts also made it for a time, and so did Herbert Donelson's family; but I do not know whether it is made now or not.

In every early home were the dye tubs, and women mostly did this work. Indigo blue and butternut brown were the most common colors, but some women acquired great skill in making and using vegetable dyes, and often the secret of a particular dye was kept in one family. Soap making was an important work on every farm. In this both men and women assisted, and each year a family produced a good supply of both hard and soft soaps. The women usually made the candles which furnished light for the long winter evenings. They were of two kinds—the moulded and the dipped tapers. Old candle molds can yet be found in Colrain attics.

I would like to pay tribute here to the wonderful cooking of Colrain women as I have known it in the last fifty years. Never again will be eaten such chicken pies as these women made. No biscuit about their crusts, but a fine crust made of butter and cream, flaky and crisp. It would melt in your mouth, with rich gravy, plenty of meat and few bones. There is nobody left who knows how to make them as Mrs. Antes Spurr, Mrs. Ansel Smith, Mrs. Henry Smith, Mrs. Newton Carpenter and others of that generation did, though good chicken pie is still made in Colrain.

Mrs. Spurr and her daughter, Mrs. Kelly, were famous for their bread and rolls and took prizes at Greenfield fair—as did Mrs. Ansel Smith for her election cake, Mrs. David Snow for doughnuts, Mrs. Sarah





Smith for piccalilli and ketchup and Mrs. Charles Marcy for pumpkin pies; and when Mrs. Olive Howard cooked a boiled dinner for the Relief Corps they had a crowd and made money. Most of the women cooked everything well, but each of them had a specialty, for which they were famed and for which they were called on for public occasions.

A poor young bride, I longed to have a specialty too—I could never compete on old recipes, I must have something new. So I learned to make timbales when on a visit to Springfield, and I bought an iron and came home ready to establish myself with a specialty all my own. When a supper was being planned I offered to furnish the dessert and was allowed the privilege. I made a large number of very nice timbale cases and a special sort of rice pudding with which, at the last minute I filled the cases and topped each with a fluff of whipped cream and a dash of currant jelly in the center. I thought these a work of art and served them proudly. Alas, everyone ate out the pudding and left my beautiful cases, and I heard a man say, "Tasted well enough, but didn't amount to nothing—I'd rather have pie." I never tried my specialty in public again. After all, who would prefer such foolishness to a real Colrain pie?

In late years women have been occupied in public affairs more than once would have been believed possible. A woman has served on the town committee at various times during the last 25 years, two women have served as librarian of the Griswold Memorial Library and Miss Bertha Read still holds that position. A woman is town clerk and treasurer, two women serve on the school committee and board of library trustees, a woman served 14 years as notary public and a woman is now town auditor.

Many women and some men have been successful school teachers, and the town misses those of an older day who boarded in town, called on the parents, took an interest in town activities. Such a teacher knew all about her children and drilled them in exercises and manners.





Present day teachers own their own cars and seldom board in town or stay a moment they can help; they do not know the parents nor even the children too well. The old style teacher is gone, and so are the private schools which flourished before the children could go to Arms Academy.

The traveling clock tinker was once a welcome visitor in town, and Colrain had one of the best in the person of Washington Call who kept the old clocks going as long as he lived. Many of them have never gone since his death. Another industry which vanished with the death of the man who created it was the making of samp, hulled corn and hominy by Charles Call who made a weekly trip to the villages to sell his products. It was good stuff—I do not know where anything like it could be bought now.

We have had many merchants in Colrain, many doctors and ministers, but only three lawyers. As the mills cut off the lumber the streams dried up, and even if the small business could now be profitable the power is gone; white coal has vanished from Colrain, and even the cotton mills use electricity much of the year.

Colrain has not done much in fine arts and we have no famous son or daughter engaged in them, but a Colrain girl married one of the most famous stained glass artists in the country—Charles J. Connick; and we had for some years a famous painter who dwelt in town and had a studio and loved to paint beautiful bits of Colrain, so I think we can lay some claim to the late Gardner Symons. A beautiful picture of a Colrain hill hangs in the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington, D.C.; and when I was in California ten years ago I went every day for weeks to gaze on a picture of Shattuckville by him. It was a beautiful picture, and while I recognized it at once I thought “I never saw Shattuckville like that” and was immediately reminded of the woman who told the painter Turner that she never saw such sunsets as he painted, and he answered, “No? Don’t you wish you could?”





I went day after day to try to see Shattuckville as it was in the picture. I knew the fairy towers showing through mist were really the cupola on Frank Field's barn and the old water tower on the mill; the river breaking through ice and snow in the foreground was just North river; and the hillside touched with sunshine, bringing it into beauty and charm, was familiar; and yet the painter's art had lifted it from the dull and commonplace by not only what he had painted and the way, but by the elimination or softening of the harsh and ugly.

It gave me not only a new view of Colrain, but of life. I went so often to look at that one picture that the attendant thought I might be a possible purchaser. The price was \$700.00. I appreciated the compliment, but told her I came to look because it was near my home. Gardner Symons is gone, the old mill is gone—never again can anyone find the scene that Gardner Symons painted; but somewhere that picture today is still making that vanished scene come alive as it is in my heart, and I think we may claim it for Colrain.

We have had a few writers in Colrain. Rev. Samuel Taggart published two volumes of his sermons. He preached 45 years in the Presbyterian church and served 14 years from this district in congress. We have wished he had written one volume, at least, concerning the town and people of his day and his life in Washington. The late Lorenzo Griswold wrote two books—"Priest and Puritan" and a volume of short stories, and he had many poems published in the Springfield Republican. Mrs. Adelaide Kemp is a successful magazine writer of both prose and poetry; and one of Colrain's sons, but now a resident of New Hampshire, is George William Pitt, listed in that state as one of its younger writers.

Quite a number of Colrain people have written about Colrain, and we have their books, articles and records. H. Bolton Miller many years ago began to save items of interest concerning town history and the genealogy of its old families. He loaned this collection to the late





Charles H. McClellan who, from them and with some research of his own, wrote in 1885 his "Early Settlers of Colrain" and made various addresses to the P.V.M.A.\* and to other organizations, which were printed, and so preserved this material. The late Francis M. Thompson delivered an address "The Beginnings of Colrain" at an old home week celebration there in 1904. This was printed; and a 120-page pamphlet was published in 1901 by the Catamount Hill Association.

Mrs. Fanny Bowen Shippee wrote many historical articles and poems which were published in the old Gazette and Courier and read at public meetings. Everyone who has attended the Catamount Hill reunions will remember her song—"All Hail to the Hills of Colrain." Miss Emily Davenport Stacy wrote a very interesting booklet, "The First School-house Flag"; Joseph B. Clark and Joseph Tinkham; also Rev. William H. Davenport, wrote articles about early industries and amusements of the town; and from all this group of writers I have borrowed to prepare this paper on the early and late industries of the town.

As I close I realize I have omitted some which might have been included, but the length of this paper deters me from trying to tell of every work and worker, for Colrain has been a busy town. It is something for us to remember that once on a time Colrain raised or made almost every article that was needed by its people; and nobody but cripples, the very aged and the mentally incompetent were accepting relief. It was a grand old town.

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## ALONG OLD ROADS

BY REV. DR. GAIUS GLENN ATKINS

Judge Francis Nims Thompson, whose judicious and benign activity amongst us we owe to the fact that his

\* P.V.M.A., vol. III, page 512.





local progenitor was a captive in Canada at the time of the Deerfield massacre, has given me tonight fee simple and the right of eminent domain in The Land of Reminiscence. It is a haunting country whose frontiers can never be fixed, whose landmarks are never the same for any two persons and never twice the same for any one person. Its shadows are strange and often refuse to lift, or else they shift to disclose the trivial and continue to hide the essential. It is an easy country in which to lose oneself. Its roads begin anywhere and end nowhere and often those most used are vanished altogether. Also those with whom one traveled them have become as imponderable as the roads—the rememberer and the remembered all shades together.

I came myself to New England in pursuit of an education in theology almost exactly fifty years ago. The education in theology got prematurely mislaid and I have never since been able to find it. In some ways I am, in that region and, I fear in others, much like Dr. Rufus Jones' Maine Farmer who said that his neighbors told him he had lost his mind. They might be right, he agreed, but he didn't miss it himself.

One may or should in surveying his own province of The Land of Reminiscence note the gates which open to let him through and why, and also what gates kept shut and why; and, to press the time-worn figure a little, the hinges upon which the opening gates turned. That will convert him to "predestination" or the theory of probabilities or leave him wondering—no matter; he will at least recognize the far-reaching issues of the apparently inconsequential. For a happy friendship with two classmates at Yale Divinity School opened a gate for me through which I entered upon all the subsequent course of my life.

They must have commended me to Principal Cutler of Mount Hermon—seeking a teacher to fill out a broken term. He must have concluded that for the time he could do no better, so in the dark of an early April night an old





Connecticut Valley train left me at Mount Hermon station and of an April morning I looked out a window in old Crosby hall across the valley. So I came to the heart of New England and lost to it my own heart.

I cannot easily put into any words the appeal of the region and my own complete surrender to it. That would need to be understood against my Ohio boyhood, love of nature and sensitiveness to historic associations. I had been comparatively untraveled. There was then for me no magic in the music of "Miami" and "Ohio"—there is now—but the cacophony of "Connecticut" captured my imagination.

There was a quiet beauty—I know now—in the low hills which were my first horizons, in fertile fields and the haze of summer heats. But here was something new and yet not unfamiliar. There had been a picture of the famous New Haven elms in our school geography and the local color of the series of McGuffey's readers through whose grades we climbed Parnassus was largely New England. This may in part account for the magnification of the "East" common to my Interior generation.

Ohio villages were straggling and unkempt—are still. Here were white houses in one long row set back from the elm-shaded streets and the mellowness of time—a patina of the spirit, over it all.

I have an early Mount Hermon recollection of teachers who came in to supper after a visit to the Old Deerfield museum and their exclamation over a door cut through with tomahawks. We could not wait until we saw it for ourselves. Settlers had been killed by Indians right in front of the Northfield church—at least a rude inscription on the ledge said so. We had gathered arrowheads and stone implements literally by the basketful from our Ohio fields and a family farm possessed a little mound—also there had been sudden death in the Ohio forests—but no inscriptions. All this was different, and when from time to time we went back to our parents and school friends I at least must have been unendurable





with a traveler's swagger and a spurious New England accent.

It is not far from Mount Hermon to Greenfield and presently our road led us there with half a wagon-load of furniture, a horse and a cat. Its gray stone church was beyond any dream I had ever entertained. I would not have exchanged it for Westminster Abbey, which I had never seen, but whose architecture surely could not have been better—only bigger. I am not now greatly inclined to modify that judgment. And there are no words to tell the friendships and loyalties of dear folk—old and young—men and women—who still, unseen, use the streets and consecrate the interior of the church with their spiritual presences.

\* \* \* \* \*

The New England of the 1890's was according to Van Wyck Brooks an Indian Summer New England whose glory was a fading leaf. It did not seem so then. We had no Brooks to tell us, though the degeneracy of the "Hill-Towns" was good for a magazine article. The most significant forces in half-hidden action were the shifting of the balance of power amongst racial strains, loss of economic and financial primacy and the slow displacement of the Yankee farmer by the peasant stock of French-Canada and Eastern Europe, and his inability to meet western competition. Such things as these were sensed but not much written or talked about.

Massachusetts, to her own economic peril was leading in social legislation for social betterment. She seemed the very essence and demonstration of Triumphant Democracy: so President Eliot told Prince Henry. Economically the corner and keystones of the New England industrial structure were the family factories. These were the conjoint creation of Yankee inventiveness and mechanical skill, water power and family faculty and inheritance. They varied of course in size, organization and specialty. Many of their names and products were





and are classic in American industry. One could have made a kind of industrial map of New England and colored it tools, shoes, woolens, cotton, skates, shaving soap, leather goods, Yankee notions, cutlery—silverware or what have you or what would you have.

Greenfield was typical, tied up with Turners Falls and Millers Falls in a sound and remunerative production of taps and dies, cutlery and silverware, cotton spinning, paper and tools. Most of these were still controlled by their founders who had built them up from very simple beginnings. Others were under the direction of the second family generation, some held and managed by the third. Not much older than that, any of them.

They had a fabulously expanding America for a market and though they were challenged by periodic "hard times" they weathered through, being well built and never over-capitalized. Their dividends were tidy, not advertised and little stock was for sale.

The income of the "first families" of the region could not, by later standards have been excessive, but they made possible a kind of living which for comfort and quiet dignity I think unmatched by any standards since. There were few marginal gadgets, but a substance of comfort and security—a good home well furnished, a good table bountifully spread, a good horse or pair, one grand tour to Europe, told over and over, a black walnut pew on the center aisle, college for the children, and a granite monument in Green River Cemetery—what more could anyone want?

Their employees were, in Greenfield, largely Yankee. Many of them had grown up with the business. Their hours were long, their wage relatively small. Joseph Griswold rather lamented the passing of the twelve-hour day and one woman employee of the Millers Falls Company, living in Greenfield, was at home week-days in daylight only about three, maybe four, months of the year. Then her employers discovered that she could take the eight o'clock train as well as the six o'clock and do





all her work just as well. But the employed owned their own homes, paid their debts and did well for their children. Emil Weisbrod told me once that he could not find a needy family in Greenfield to whom to send a Thanksgiving basket. I do not know how hard he tried, but his statement now seems a dream out of dreamland. Everybody was as independent as everybody else and yet with the inherited discipline which made the town a body politic, wise, tenacious and entirely competent for its own affairs. For the most part the population was native to the soil and drew its vital fluids from the oldest coherent social order in America. And further back—for there is an arresting correspondence between the names in Bunhill-Fields burying ground in Old London town and the names on the grave stones in all old New England burying grounds.

It is easy to idealize it all. That is the magic of roads traveled only in recollection. Their borders are forever green and they run through vales of Avalon.

An excess of individuality may become cross-grained meanness and lonely poverty engender a decadent morality. The stonewalls of what were once meadows and pastures, beginning to be lost in second growth timber, were mute witnesses of one of the bravest fights toil ever waged against an inhospitable soil, hopelessly lost. We know now that there are better ways of using that same soil and making it tributary to the economy of the commonwealth—but then there were only the stonewalls and the lilac-hidden cellar holes and the healing touch of time upon a not inglorious battle field whose tired soldiers, their warfare over, rested in a little burying ground and, having always waked early, were quite content if Gabriel delayed sounding his horn.

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Beside the joy of a preacher's first pastorate with a church of whose kindness and patience he can never say enough there remain two memories, luminous and inclusive: First an unhurried and constant communion





with out-doors—in all seasons. I walked endlessly—following the brooks up the gorges through the green mists and vernal leafage, under October tapestry, through the silence of winter's snow. We drove as endlessly, our well-bred sorrel horse knew all the roads. Marvin Fellows would leave a pair of shoes half-soled to guide us and tell us of his own boyhood in the Shelburne hills. It is all a paradox, I have never since lived so unhurried a life and yet in preaching and reading I laid the foundations of everything I have done since.

Lucius Nims' livery stable office was conveniently—no, strategically located. It commanded the street: an observation post, a rendezvous of choice spirits, a town-gossip exchange and a fragrant-with-horsiness sanctuary; New-England incarnate in the wit and wisdom, boundless kindness, the physical strength of Lucius. There we watched the passing pageant with a tide of comment which could it have been captured and made permanent would lend distinction to any historical documentation, and would perpetuate the raciness of a race. There would be some need of censorship, which would be a loss to posterity.

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It seems now all like the rivers themselves, so much has gone so much remains. The content changes, the controlling channels endure. It is still the same stream.

I cannot put into any words either the significance of it all or—one dares to use the word—the essential preciousness of it all. It had cost ten generations on American soil of courage, sacrifice, battle, labor, vision and devotion—and a thousand years of the same great qualities on English soil before it was rerooted here. It has outlasted through its own interior strength and rightness, a menacing continuity of assaults. It is ours to maintain at any cost. Its banners seen and unseen have been long in the winds, we will not lower them now to any pagan device.





## MEMORIALS OF COLONIAL DAYS IN THE POCUMTUCK VALLEY

BY ARTHUR PEABODY PRATT, D.D.

A marker by the side of the main highway running south from Greenfield indicates the turn to Old Deerfield, and carries this legend: "OLD DEERFIELD Indian land called Pocumtuck, settled by men from Dedham in 1671. Attacked by Indians, burnt and abandoned in 1675. Reoccupied and attacked in 1704, by French and Indians, who took 47 lives, and carried off 112 captives to Canada, of whom 60 were later redeemed."\* This altogether too brief account of the happenings of those far days is of interest to us as this paper has to do with memorials of Colonial Days in the Pocumtuck Valley, and both Old Deerfield Street and the Deerfield Meadows lie at the heart of the region of our concern. While it may be well to furnish some historical background for the events commemorated by the memorials, it is not in my thought to deal with local history in any detail as all this is too well known to require extended discussion.

The memorials of the Valley have been established or erected to preserve the memory of some outstanding event or person, and to keep alive some story of heroism and sacrifice. They also serve as reminders of an obligation the present generation owes to the heroic men and women of the past, men and women whose faith and courage enabled them to carry bravely on and win the victory over almost overwhelming odds, the fruit of which it is our privilege to enjoy. It is only natural for man to take pride in great achievements and to glory in the prowess of heroes. And it is not only proper but eminently fitting to erect monuments, and to establish me-

\* "Historical Markers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony," 1930.





memorials, to preserve for posterity some record of the great and important happenings, that lessons of patriotism and faithful service may be taught. Therefore we are not surprised to discover that the idea of keeping memorials dates far into the past;—as one of the earlier Apostles wrote, “To put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them” (Epistle of St. Peter). In the Old Testament, in the Book of Esther, the people were commanded to observe days of historic moment in the life of their nation. Certain days of great significance were thus regarded: “These days should be remembered and kept throughout every generation, every family, every province and every city—nor the memorial of them perish.” The Passover Feast in Hebrew life, for example, which was a memorial of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, was “to be kept throughout their generation.” There were recognized “stones of memorial” and there were other stones set up as monuments to mark places and events which were not to be forgotten. So have we, in our time, set up stones, markers and tablets, erected monuments and statues, dedicated parks and buildings,—all as memorials that heroic deeds and achievements may be remembered from one generation to another. Such memorials, we believe, should be as altars before which prayer may be offered for the heroic dead, and dedication be made for heroic living.

In the year 1790 a number of the inhabitants of Boston caused to be erected on Beacon Hill a monument from a design by Charles Bulfinch, to “commemorate that train of events which led to the American Revolution and finally secured liberty and Independence to the United States.” This monument was erected on the site of the “warning beacon” which had been placed in the center of the hill, and from which this hill took its name. All this was under an order of the General Court dated March 4, 1794–5. There were four tablets in the base of this monument, each of which carried its own historic legend. It seems that the Town of Boston must have





been commercially minded about 1811, for the land on which the monument stood was sold to John Hancock and Samuel Spear, after which the highest part of the hill was dug away, the monument having been taken down and destroyed. Fortunately the four slate tablets were preserved in the State House, so that almost a century later—in 1898—when the Bunker Hill Monument Association decided to reproduce in stone an exact replica of the old monument these tablets were placed in its base. Thus has it come about that the descendants of the Puritans living in Boston, and of the Puritans who wandered far afield and settled by the Long River in the fertile valley of the Pocumtuck, may journey to Beacon Hill and read the inscriptions which are to be seen on the four sides of this interesting memorial which now stands in the State House grounds close by the thoroughfare known as Beacon Street.

So much for its history, and now let us turn to the reading of the tablet placed in the west side of the monument. "Americans—While from this eminence—Scenes of luxuriant fertility—Of flourishing commerce—And abodes of social happiness—Meet your view—Forget not those—Who by their exertions—Have secured for you—These blessings." (— indicate separate lines.) Standing today by the Beacon Monument, under the shadow of the gilded dome of the Massachusetts State House, we feel that this admonition is most pertinent, and that it is also fraught with great and grave significance. All about there is to be seen unmistakable evidence of flourishing commerce, and abodes of social happiness, while not far distant are scenes of luxuriant fertility. Surely all succeeding generations ought to make some effort to memorialize in thought and word and deed these distant benefactors.

We return now to the Old Deerfield marker in the Pocumtuck Valley, to review some local history. This marker records the fact that the Deerfield colony was settled by men from Dedham, which happening came





about on this wise. A certain plantation of some two thousand acres at Natick was granted Apostle John Eliot's "praying Indians" by the General Court in 1651. When—later—it was understood that Dedham had rights in this land the General Court in 1663 proceeded to grant to the "Proprietors of Dedham" eight thousand acres elsewhere, and two years later men from Dedham chose to accept land in that part of the colony known as "Pecumtick,"—hence the name of "Dedham Grants" as applied to the Pocumtuck settlements just beyond the Great River Quinneticot. Thus all unwittingly the "praying Indians" enter the picture, and because of this fact we will do well to take time and visit their one-time village of Natick, not far from Dedham when one travels by car. "NATICK 'A place of God's providing'"—reads the marker at the town line—"Established 1651 by the Apostle Eliot as a village for the Christian Indians from Nonantum, and governed by them and their descendants for almost a century." Here can be seen what is left of the Eliot Oak, that ancient tree by which the Indians were wont to gather and listen to the words of sacred Scripture interpreted to them by the white Apostle of God. Here is one memorial before which the visitor may well pause and give thought to that great soul who was "moved to compassion for the ignorant and depraved state" of the red man, and then devoted his life to the good of these forest children. We can picture the venerable preacher, Bible in hand, looking in kindness upon his Indian flock gathered under the spreading branches and green leaves of the white oak tree. One is reminded of Joshua, in the early history of the Hebrews, setting up a great stone by the oak in Shechem, and calling upon the people to put away strange gods and to incline their hearts unto the Lord.

Thus did it come about that men from Dedham or thereabout broke ground in Pocumtuck as early as 1669, and that for several years the affairs of the settlers were controlled from Dedham town. In 1763, as the result of





a petition to the General Court, an additional grant was made to the Pocumtuck settlement, "so that the whole be to the content of seven square miles." Some of the rough boundary stones marking the original 8,000 acre line, established in 1672, may still be found.\* One is in Greenfield on the mountain road to Montague City, near the Bear's Den Road entrance; another is on the lower side of the Ox-Bow on the South Shelburne Road. It may be noted here that in 1674 the name of Deerfield was taken by the Pocumtuck settlement, and also that there was a condition attached to the second grant made by the General Court, this condition being as follows: "Provided that within three years an able and orthodox minister be settled among them." This imposed condition was happily complied with, for in 1683 the Reverend John Williams was called to be their pastor, and they built for him a house. It is of entertaining interest to learn that this young cleric was not ordained and settled as permanent pastor until 28 months trial as preacher, thus attesting to the thoroughness of their doctrinal inquiry as to his orthodoxy!

The mention of the name of the first minister of the colony brings at once to mind that dreadful night in February, in the winter of 1704, when the settlement was sacked and burned by the Indians, and the survivors carried away through the snows to Canada. Then occurred the sad and tragic death of Eunice Williams, who fell while crossing Green River. The marker by the side of the road, in the vicinity of the Greenfield Water Works Pumping Station, records this heart-breaking happening in a simple statement of the facts: "Eunice Williams, wife of the Reverend John Williams, 'the Redeemed Captive,' was killed at this place on March 1, 1704, during the Deerfield massacre." When at last the 'redeemed captive' returned from his captivity in Canada the present John Williams house was built for him,

\* Judge Thompson showed me these stones in the course of our several tramps about Greenfield and vicinity.





a fitting welcome for the returned pastor beloved by his people, and in this house he lived until his death in June 1729. The John Williams House, now restored with additions, is a most fascinating memorial, as it stands today on the grounds of the Academy in Deerfield. The Deerfield students who find lodgement under its hospitable roof have about them a constant reminder of the heroic days of the early settlement, and also a visible symbol of the pioneer faith and persistence, and the courage and hardihood of the settlers. To live in such an atmosphere, amid such surroundings, should arouse the heroic in youth.

The visitor who walks about the Academy grounds, or along Deerfield Street, soon becomes conscious of other memorials. Not the least among these are the stately trees whose spreading branches have offered through the years protecting shade to man and nesting places for birds. These memorials of Nature are verdant reminders of the past, and to all who admire them with feelings akin to affection the following lines hold:

“Lean close and set thine ear against the bark,  
Then tell me what faint murmurous sounds are heard.”

In fact all through this region are to be seen venerable trees which have witnessed events now commemorated by tablets of stone and markers of bronze. Many of these trees are majestic in height and beautiful in symmetry, lovely in foliage possessing a kind of nobility which commands admiration. On Deerfield Street are elms and maples and buttonwoods which were there when the settlement was young. Possibly the most interesting of all is the great buttonwood which stands within the bounds of what was once the enclosure of the fort which was built in 1689, and remained until 1758. “We can well believe by its size” wrote J. R. Simmons in his “Historic Trees of Massachusetts”—“that this tree was standing at the time of the Indian Wars. What events have taken place within its shadow and close beyond!” There is





truth in this observation for near at hand stood the Stebins house where "seven men, besides women and children, held 200 soldiers and 140 Indians at bay for three hours" on that murderous twenty-ninth of February 1703-4; and there was also the "Old Indian House" built by Ensign Sheldon in 1698.

Members of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association hardly need to be reminded that not alone is Deerfield rich in memorials of Colonial Days which should stir the heart by way of remembrance, but other regions in and about the charming Valley possess memorials both interesting and note-worthy. A few miles to the south is the scene of the Bloody Brook massacre, where Captain Lothrop and the "flower of Essex County" went down in the darkness of the ambushade of the crafty and cruel red man. And then some miles to the north, on an island in the Connecticut River, other brave and determined men, under the leadership of Captain William Turner, of Boston, avenged this tragedy in the heroic "Falls Fight" in the early morning of May 19, 1676. A monument to Captain Turner is to be seen by the French King Road near the end of the bridge to Turners Falls, which spans the river at this point and overlooks the scene of this daring exploit. Sites of four early forts, which guarded the way to the north, are indicated by roadside markers in the town of Bernardston.

Our real interest, however, must continue in the Valley of the Pocumtuck which extends westward from Deerfield, and in the highway which bears the historic name of The Mohawk Trail. The Trail road starts from Greenfield, and continues in a westerly direction over and among the hills, to find itself again in the river valley some miles beyond. What is now Shelburne was in colonial days included in a tract granted Deerfield in 1712, in "the unappropriated land of the Province—9 miles west, to the western woods." This was sometimes called the "Deerfield Pasture" and the first actual settlements were established here in or about 1752. The out-





standing memorials of this region are the everlasting hills which look down upon the valleys, so quiet today, but which in the yesterdays of our thinking beheld the coming and the going of the dreaded Mohawks, as well as witnessing the ravages of the Pocumtucks. Continuing on beyond Shelburne Falls this valley road soon brings us into Charlemont, a town which early acquired the modern habit of frequently changing its name. Here was one of the "Townships" granted by the General Court in 1735 to the Town of Boston, and was known as "Boston Township No. 1." When this grant was later purchased by two men named Chickley and Keyes it was called Chickley's Town, then Charley Mont, and later Charley's Mont. Since 1740 it has born its present name of Charlemont, but the names of one of the early owners is perpetuated in the Chickley Alp, and in the river which bears his name.

There are not many permanent memorials in these parts, but the observant traveler journeying through Charlemont on the Mohawk Trail is sure to see a certain massive buttonwood tree at the foot of a hill close by the roadside. A spring of sparkling water is near its base. This tree is impressive in its own right, rising as it does to a height of almost 100 feet, a distinguished landmark at all seasons of the year. It may be considered in the nature of a memorial since here at the foot of the tree slept Captain Moses Rice, the first pioneer settler, when he came to take possession of the land he had purchased for himself and family. This was in 1743, and not far away on the side of the hill above Captain Rice finally perished at the hands of the Indians in 1755. Markers placed as memorials note some of these facts, and there are tablets indicating the sites of the rude forts—Taylor and Rice and Hawks—which were built to protect the inhabitants of these parts. Surely here is a valley teeming with interest.

We now return in thought to Boston and the Beacon Monument. In Colonial days any journey from Boston





or Dedham to the settlements in the far-off Pocumtuck country required several days of arduous and uncomfortable travel. The rough roads followed earlier trails, and peril lurked in the shadows. The trip from Boston to Deerfield may be made today over hard-surfaced highways and in cars designed for comfort and speed, and it requires but a few hours to cover the distance. Old names are given the east-west routes, and over the Boston Post Road or the Concord Turnpike the traveler passes through busy cities and through towns with shaded streets. The roads lead into pleasant countryside, and by fields and wood, and past farms where life is quietly lived. Here and there are to be seen markers of stone and bronze, memorials touching on a past out of which the present has come. The same hills that looked down upon the coming and the going of the Red men and upon the scenes of the early settler, stand today continuing their silent witnessing of the changing life of the people. The abiding hills about which and over which went the trails of the Indians, later carried the narrow and twisted roads of pioneer settlers. Rugged men and women, strong of faith and heart, conquered the wilderness. They overcame all obstacles because the venture that was theirs depended more surely on their souls than on their crude tools and weapons. A goodly store of hope was ever among their necessary commodities. We like to think of them as being willing to sacrifice comforts, even their all, for the beliefs they held and for their faith, and for the right to hold both of these. Our fitting recognition of such faith and courage should be in maintaining intact the free institution they founded.

It is a source of real satisfaction to all who cherish memorials that the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, established in Old Deerfield, faithfully, happily and with thoroughness acts as custodian and historian of the outstanding memorial of this region. This organization links the events of a far yesterday with the present, and has arranged to pass its memorials, its records and





its relics on from generation to generation, and for this happy interest the people should be truly grateful. Other memorials there are about us, as the early adventures in living in a new country have left their peculiar mark; crumbling chimney piles, boards weathered silver gray, some old door-stone by which lilacs grow, and a grass-grown depression in the earth. How eloquently would these homely memorials speak of the simple and humble life of their day, were such power bestowed upon them. They would tell also of high adventure and sweet romance, of tragedy and heroism, and of suffering and death nobly met. There is something splendid and heartening in the story of pioneer persistence; truly they now rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.

Churches of the faith of our fathers are to be seen as we travel through the valley and across the hills of the Deerfield country. Simple landmarks to many a tourist today—or, perhaps, a guide to the Inn just beyond! To our Puritan forefathers the church was a memorial—the meeting house where they went regularly to meet and to worship the Lord God Omnipotent. Its white spire still points upward, a reminder of the pioneers' staunch and steadfast and simple belief in the sovereignty of God and the awfulness of sin. Memorials of such a religious faith should impress upon our day the fact that abiding trust in God was the bed-rock of their character. Stern creeds were theirs, but these were after all an admirable discipline for a pioneer country.

Today we know the Pocumtuck Valley country as a place of charm, and we love it. We love its vistas of sunlit green fields and pastures, of tree-clad hills and valleys, the plowed land of its farms, its home-life and its industry. The memorials and the permanent monuments kindle within us strong and deep veneration of our democratic institutions, and altogether we are impressed by the scene and the history behind it all. Highly should we resolve to "forget not those who by their exertion have secured for (us) these blessings."





# POCUMTUCK VALLEY MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

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## REPORT

This is the fourth of the "annuals" which will constitute Volume IX of our "History and Proceedings." Each contains original matter edited and published in a limited edition under a vote by the corporation.

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It is the purpose of these annual publications to make our papers on local biography, history and happenings available to members of our association and all others who are interested in the Old Deerfield region.

FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON, *President*;  
W. HERBERT NICHOLS, *Treasurer*.

Memorial Hall,  
Deerfield, Mass.





## SEVENTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING—1942

*In the Council Room* at Memorial Hall on the twenty-fourth of February—a clear, cool winter day—members of the P.V.M.A. held their annual meeting. Following reading and approval of the record kept by Margaret Harris Allen, recording secretary, tributes were paid to two former councilors who had died during the past year. Reuben L. Lurie of Boston spoke with feeling of the work of Herbert C. Parsons, editor and social worker; and a paper on the life and characteristics of Miss Margaret Miller, written by Margaret C. Whiting, was read by Mrs. Gertrude Cochrane Smith.

*The officers and councilors\** of the association were reelected and Mrs. Mary Adams Ball was elected to fill the unexpired term of Miss Miller as a councilor. The *trustees\** were also reelected. President Thompson reported on behalf of the executive committee and Mrs. Allen gave the report by the curators of the Frary House estate.

*Harry W. Fay of New Salem* then spoke on the man-made lake which gives his town some 25 miles of shore and furnishes Greater Boston with water; briefly reviewing town history from a time when New Salem was the largest in the county in population to its present superiority in area.

This was followed by reports on the origins, accomplishments and aims of two *historical societies* in our county. Mrs. Hunting of New Salem contributed the story of the formation of the Swift River Valley Historical Society; and an account of the large and valuable historical collection at Orange, prepared by Grace French Weymouth, its curator, was read by Judge Thompson. He also read parts of a valuable paper containing reminiscences by Reverend D. H. Strong of

\*Listed on page 279.

As the Council of the American Medical Association is composed of representatives of the various medical organizations, it is not surprising that the Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report.

The report and conclusions of the Council are as follows: The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report.

There is a lack of uniformity in the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report.

The report was prepared by the Council of the American Medical Association. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report. The Council has been able to secure the cooperation of the various medical organizations in the preparation of the report.



Buckland, presented during the past year at the request of our president.

*At the Council meeting* reports of treasury and trust funds were made by Treasurer Nichols; Mr. Coffin reported for the auditors, commending the clarity of the accounting; the reports were accepted. The auditors and all committee members were reappointed.\* In view of war conditions and the greater security of the east wing, the council authorized the temporary removal of the "Old Indian House" door to that wing and voted that the executive committee might transfer other objects in its discretion.

*In the town hall* the supper furnished by the women of Deerfield was of the usual excellent quality and abundant quantity. The New England home cooking and the harmonious voices of the Glee Club of Deerfield Academy, as directed by Ralph H. Oatley, are highly appreciated by the audience which gathers each year to hear the historical papers presented in the evening.

Reverend Margaret B. Barnard of Greenfield spoke of her service and experience as a minister in our county and elsewhere; Miss Minnie Ellen Hawks, who has often read to the association the papers written by others, contributed a delightful paper on her own secluded region west of the Deerfield river; and Judge Thompson, "yielding to the requests of many" old-timers, placed upon the record many merry tales of no importance and much repetition. The meeting dissolved at 9.30 p. m., the usual closing-time in recent years.

\*Listed on page 279.





## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Attendance at Memorial Hall was over 2,700, somewhat greater than in the previous year. Though I predicted that the general public would be more interested in Frary House than in a museum, the two appear to be visited by about equal numbers. The Sheldon Collection has received hair wreaths and other articles from Mrs. J. C. Woodard, Mrs. A. M. Robinson and Adelia Hobart; and there have been gifts to the library which include the Denio Genealogy, two volumes of Vital Records and the Memorial History of Boston. Rev. D. H. Strong of Buckland has given us his reminiscences in writing, including interesting recollections of Franklin County ministers. Miss Whiting contributed valuable historical notes and copies of town records of Hatfield made by Miss Margaret Miller, with her Deerfield note-book and essays by her mother Mrs. Silvanus Miller.

We have been rather sharply criticised by some persons who wished to use, at their own convenience and without previous notice, the treasures of our library and its manuscripts. We admit the desirability of a librarian and our inability to pay for one. The third floor of the east wing has become a portrait gallery by accretion rather than by planning; and as its ceiling and walls need refinishing it may be well to select a committee of vigilantes to then properly hang the subjects. Some changes in contents of the cases there might be made at that time.

R. Stanley Reid of Greenfield has presented us with several large showcases, which are being filled by various of our smaller exhibits. This has improved the appearance of the first floor of the east wing. Under the stairs there I have placed another long glass case, in which I am putting Thompson and Adams, Nims and Amadon, relics, including a pine light-stand which belonged to





the little dressmaker of the "Jolly Good Times," stories, and latter to the "Lois Whitaker" of those tales by Mary P. Wells Smith. We need more glass cases; and to one or two people who have considered making donations of small objects I have suggested that these were necessary for the protection and exhibition of their gifts.

Mrs. Biddle reported gifts during 1941 which included a copy of the Denio Genealogy and other volumes of value, and Mrs. Alice W. Garman presented an interesting cobbler's box and tools and expressed an intent to send us copies of plays written by her aunt Miss Margaret Miller.

Attention has been given by your executive committee to the trees at Memorial Hall and Frary House, and during 1942 two or three may be removed for the good of others. The hall is likely to require some repairs, and much might be done along several lines if our income was sufficient. We have received circular letters of inquiry as to our preparation for possible air raids, and I shall call that subject to the attention of the council today. We may expect that fewer people will view our exhibits while the shortage of rubber continues.

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## REPORT BY THE CURATORS OF FRARY HOUSE

BY MARGARET HARRIS ALLEN

Frary House was open for its second season from the last of April to the middle of October, when the rooms became too cold for anyone's comfort.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Bertha Arms, the caretaker, passed away very suddenly early in the Spring. However, we were able to enlist the aid of several people in keeping the house open. The threat of a gasoline





shortage affected the tourist travel the last part of the season.

In spite of these difficulties, however, our total income has shown an increase over that of the previous year.

We are glad to report that every window in Frary House (of which there are dozens) has been properly puttied and painted. They were in very bad condition.

The serious state of world affairs makes the problems of Frary House seem of very small importance. It seems quite possible that the number of our guests during the war will be sharply reduced. However, we will carry on as best we may.

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## MARGARET MILLER

BY MARGARET C. WHITING

The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association has lost an important member, for Margaret Miller, who died last July, was genuinely concerned in its interests during her many years of connection with it, and was troubled lately by the evidence of its flagging energy. By nature she was well fitted to understand the value of traditions and the need of preserving them, and to her personal gift for collecting and sifting their significant elements she added a literary talent that presented them with charm. From this store she contributed freely and her generous response to requests for help in the annual program is remembered by us all. Hers was a constant interest in the Association. Beginning in her youth a visit to Deerfield and especially to Memorial Hall was one of her particular pleasures. She early made acquaintance with Mr. Sheldon and Miss Baker who recognized in her a true enthusiasm for the society, the place, and the history that made both the village and the P.V.M.A. a unique combination. Though





loyal to Hatfield, her Mother's home, she felt a deeper regard for this town in its more important relation to the whole Connecticut Valley, and her most personal satisfaction was found in her own connection with this village. In frequent consultation with Mr. Sheldon, whose writings she admired, she was able to give him help, and she enjoyed the tasks he set for her.

Hers was no slavish admiration and she held stoutly to her own conception of the place the Association should occupy in the community. While she was secretary she proposed a free admission to the Hall for the townspeople, and met the strong opposition of the President who marked his disagreement by demoting her from her office! Margaret never retracted her opinion, but she was not a fighter, and there was no hard feelings on either side. She continued to make for Mr. Sheldon's birthday the big loaf of sponge cake that was like his Mothers, as long as he lived, and it was always graciously accepted and eaten by him. It was her annual custom to pay a special visit to Mrs. Sheldon, on that birthday anniversary as evidence of her lasting admiration for his remarkable talents.

It is in the light of this love for old history, and because of her especial love of Deerfield that Margaret Miller deserves remembrance. She was a true daughter of New England. Yankee to the backbone, her qualities largely partook of the inheritance from her Mother's people, the Waits, the Gerrys, the Graves, all first settlers of Hatfield,—good Indian fighters too, for we have not forgotten Ben Wait and his grim courage. Though Margaret's father, Silvanus Miller 2nd, was of old Long Island and early New York origin, and her Mother, Mary Esther Graves Miller, was possessed of a spiritual and intellectual culture that knew no sectional boundaries, Margaret was so firmly rooted in the soil of New England that she displayed her immediate family upbringing only in superficial ways. Unlike her two sisters and brothers she was from first to last a New Englander.





It was a pity she did not find her special gift for historical research in her youth. After her school days the family interest in art, and her devotion to her next older sister Ellen, lead her into choosing the serious study of wood engraving as a profession. There were many engravers among their friends. In the early eighteen-eighties this was a reproductive art emerging into the position of original work along with etching and lithography, a movement largely influenced by Elbridge Kingsley, the one genius Hatfield may claim as hers. He was a lifelong friend of the family, and it was a natural choice for Margaret, who had a pretty gift for drawing, to spend two laborious and happy winters in New York studying wood engraving at Cooper Union. Unfortunately, just as she had attained a considerable degree of skill, the cheap method of plate engraving for illustrative use was developed and cutting pictures on wood blocks for printing was abandoned as a profession. Margaret had spent two years on this difficult task of technical education exactly at the hour of its doom.

Probably she would have failed to use her acquired accomplishment, for the continual use of the microscope necessary in cutting a fine line, caused a muscular strain of the eyes, and for a good many years she was much hampered by this weakness.

Returning to Hatfield Margaret's other secondary gift, that of writing, claimed her efforts, and she contributed short articles (always about old times) to *The New York Tribune* and the *New York Evening Post* two literary-minded newspapers that had long published her Mother's charming essays.

As her eyes permitted Margaret then began a long and faithful study of the early records of Hatfield. It was a work that involved much toil, deciphering the crabbed and ill-spelled records of the early town officials, a labor that also brought her much pleasure. She delighted in the quaint glimpses of Yankee character the simple entries of town happenings revealed, and





to trace from year to year the interplay of character they disclosed was reward enough.

From childhood Margaret had made many friends among the old people of the village, going regularly to sit with them to listen to their stories of their lives, tales she never forgot, and which sometimes oddly illuminated the confused records of the town scribes, by hitching together their disconnected facts. Her regard for these favorite friends was shown in the party for her eleventh birthday which she celebrated with a group of old ladies all over eighty years of age,—“one of the nicest parties” she ever enjoyed, she would recollect.

From the serious examination of the old records, and in their old verbal narratives the papers Margaret prepared for the P.V.M.A. annual meetings were derived. Begun in the hope of writing the town history, a task for which she was peculiarly well fitted, the project was only abandoned from lack of personal funds and the complete apathy of the town towards helping in its publication, our association was better able to recognize her value both as a writer and historian.

It cannot be denied that Margaret Miller too easily accepted discouragement of her efforts. It was a trait that often obscured or hampered the play of her gifts. She did not lack belief in herself; she knew the worth of what she could do, but, like other New Englanders of talent in her generation, the cold wind of criticism withered her ambition for personal effort. Perhaps it was the need of losing self-consciousness, that peculiar inheritance from the Puritan past which has so often dogged the later Yankees, which caused Margaret to turn to writing a series of charming little sketches of country folk ways in the impersonal form of plays. She showed a considerable sense of stage craft in their composition, and professional actors have praised their acting quality. As the short episodes, cleverly developed by a group of Yankees in excellent dialog, Margaret's delineation of character is particularly successful, and





her sly humor and sudden turns of wit that belonged to her nature, give a flavor to the situations she portrays. Pulling the strings of her imaginary people, safe behind the scenes, Margaret's writing in these short plays has a freedom and ease, that shows how self-forgetfulness was necessary to her full expression.

This, also, Margaret once showed in a surprising manifestation of her fundamental character, and here we touch on a quality only her intimates knew, her colonial patriotism and fiery political traits that her ancestry on both sides reveal in her family history were implanted in Margaret's very nature, and in her strong opinions about national politics she never wavered or gave ground to opposition. Here, also, she attained complete freedom. Deep in her being the spirit of the Indian fighter Ben Wait must have stirred when, deeply perturbed by local affairs, she wrote a series of six doggerel lampoons about Deerfield's political conditions, and, encouraged by the editor Mr. Parsons, published them in the *Greenfield Gazette*, between the years 1901 and 1905. They produced a considerable excitement though now forgotten along with the unhappy circumstances that caused them, but their anonymity was successfully preserved until now, who, looking at the quiet, blue-eyed woman, who never spoke in public, nor spoke freely at any time, could connect her with the coarse satire and common phraseology that was used with such effect. They had an effect at the time, but are only brought into notice now as a necessary item in this appraisal of Margaret Miller's character.

Outwardly, she lived a simple life of a well-bred country woman. She was interested in birds and their habits, she liked to do a little gardening, she enjoyed long walks and she loved both cats and dogs. She busied herself in all the ways of pleasant living, with an occasional visit to her New York relations, she returned to her village with renewed enjoyment. After the Miller family removed from Hatfield to make their home in





the fine old Nims House on Deerfield Street in 1893, the strongest wish of Margaret's heart was fulfilled. Everything that belonged to Deerfield was dear to her, and the dimming of her interest in her latest years did not abate her affection for the village and the P.V.M.A.

And so, at the age of 77 Margaret Miller died, the last of her immediate family, and one of the last representatives also of the old cultivated country-loving New Englanders whose ancestors made their homes the center of their lives, and whose talents were used when required, but whose daily tasks were their chief concern.

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## THE SWIFT RIVER VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BY BEATRICE A. FAY HUNTING, LIBRARIAN

I have been asked to write something about the origin, aims and accomplishments of the Swift River Valley Historical Society, and it seems fitting to begin with a brief sketch of the life of the Society's founder, Dr. Frederick H. Thompson, who died at his home in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, December 14, 1939 at the age of 95 years and four months. He founded the New Salem Historical Society in 1932. In 1935 it became the Swift River Valley Historical Society.

On August 5, 1844 there was joy in New Salem in the large colonial farmhouse of Captain Clark Thompson and his wife, Nancy, for to them was born a son, whom they named Frederick Henry. The boy was a great-grandson of one of the early settlers, James Thompson, who had located in New Salem with his family about 1770. When only 12 years of age we find Frederick and his older sister, Elisa, enrolled as students at New Salem Academy, 2½ miles from their home, and boarding themselves during the week at the home of Mrs. Horton near the Academy.





Frederick Thompson, after two or three years of study at New Salem Academy, transferred to Phillips Exeter Academy, graduating there in 1861 with President's Lincoln son, Tad, for a classmate. He was enrolled at Harvard in the class of 1865 but, like many other young men of that time, he enlisted for service in the Civil War. He was soon discharged, however, because the army surgeons did not consider him strong enough. In 1864 and '65 he attended Amherst College and in 1870 was graduated from the Harvard Medical School after serving an interneship at the Massachusetts General Hospital. In 1870, also, Dr. Thompson married Miss Harriet Fiske Howes of Petersham and began the practice of medicine in the town of Lancaster, but four years later, in 1874, he went to Fitchburg where the remainder of his long life was spent.

Although only his boyhood days had been spent in New Salem and none of the Thompson family remained there, Dr. Thompson retained a great love for his native town and frequently came back to visit his birthplace and to renew old acquaintances at the New Salem Academy reunions held annually on the third Thursday of August. At the reunions Dr. Thompson and other prominent alumni were often called upon to speak and on a number of occasions he spoke on a subject in which he was greatly interested—the need for a Historical Society in New Salem in order to preserve historical documents and relics.

Dr. Thompson, who at that time was 88 years of age and handicapped by extreme deafness, was present at the Academy Reunion held on August 18, 1932 and again spoke on the subject of the New Salem Historical Society. He said "The towns of the Swift River Valley are to be acquired by the Commonwealth in the development of an adequate future water supply for the needs of the Metropolitan Water District. If these towns of the Swift River Valley are to die that the Metropolitan Water District may live, should not there





be erected a Memorial Building, (fire proof), in memory of said towns, which shall contain suitable tablets in their memory, and shall be a depository for all their historical records, historical relics, genealogies, etc.

"If such a building is to be erected, will not New Salem, a renowned educational centre of this region for many generations past, be the logical place where it should be located, and is this not an additional reason why the New Salem Historical Society should be organized immediately and incorporated so that it may plan, locate, erect, furnish, and administer this Memorial Building?"

As a result of Dr. Thompson's enthusiasm, the president of the New Salem Academy Alumni Association appointed a committee, which met at the close of the exercises to confer with Dr. Thompson about forming the society and decided to call a meeting on Friday, August 26, which all people interested were invited to attend.

At that meeting it was voted to form the New Salem Historical Society. After much discussion a constitution was adopted and signed by 17 persons who were present. A nominating committee to prepare a list of officers was chosen and the meeting adjourned until September 3, 1932, when Dr. Thompson was elected the first president of the new society with Harry W. Fay, vice-president; Mrs. Geneva S. Ballard, secretary; Alba D. Paige, treasurer and Mrs. Hazel Stowell, librarian, these officers also comprising the executive committee. According to the constitution the society was to have two regular meetings a year, the annual meeting on the third Thursday of June and the other on the third Thursday of November.

The first regular meeting of the New Salem Historical Society was held on November 17, 1932 and the new society was fully launched with 44 names signed to the charter membership list, although one of those who signed at the organization meeting in August had al-





ready passed away. In response to an invitation from the executive committee of the New Salem Society a number of members of the Prescott Society were present at this meeting. Dr. Thompson spoke regarding his idea of a fireproof memorial building to commemorate the towns,—Prescott, Dana, Greenwich, Enfield and New Salem to be taken wholly or in part by the State.

During 1934 the interest in Dana concerning a larger historical organization was manifested when ten Dana people attended the June meeting of the New Salem Society. At the November meeting of that year President Thompson brought in plans showing three designs for a Memorial Building which had been drawn by a Fitchburg firm of architects, and there was much hope that a Memorial Building for the Swift River Valley towns might some day become a reality.

However, difficulties arose in the path of the proposed larger society and the proposed Memorial Building. In accordance with a suggestion, there had been appointed a "Committee of Five" with a member from each of the five Valley towns affected by the building of the Quabbin Reservoir in order to get the towns together for the formation of the Swift River Valley Historical Society, which was the only name proposed for the new organization. But Enfield, many miles away at the lower end of the Reservoir, showed little or no interest in a project so far away and appeared to be looking toward its near neighbor, Belcher-town. And even Prescott, which had once voted to join us, and would have done so if it had been a union of only the New Salem and Prescott Societies, wished to keep their name intact and not lose their identity in a Swift River project. The Prescott Society also decided that they had sufficient funds to maintain their own organization and after a time became incorporated.

In June 1935 the New Salem Historical Society voted





to become incorporated. As there were already members from other towns in the valley it was voted that the society be incorporated with the name "Swift River Valley Historical Society." The final meeting of the New Salem Historical Society took place on Nov. 21, 1935 and on the same date the first meeting of the Swift River Valley Historical Society was held. Dr. Thompson was chosen to be the first president of the new Swift River Valley Historical Society and was able to be present at the first annual meeting in June 1936 when he was made honorary president for the rest of his life.

The New Salem selectmen had allowed the town hall to be used for the historical meetings, but for several years the society had no place to keep the few historical treasures which came into its possession. However, when the town acquired a new town hall and moved into it in 1939, it was possible to rent the old town hall and the Swift River Valley Historical Society is now using it for its collection. Although the old town hall is slightly more than a century old and of wooden construction, it is in good condition, and we are fortunate in also having the use of its good sized fire-proof vault. We have acquired a sign for the front of the building and now feel that we really have a home.

Our collection is growing and we are beginning to be quite proud of our acquisitions, which include interesting articles from all the five Valley towns. A little more than a year ago we bought some second hand show-cases so that we are now able to display small articles to better advantage. Among the articles which we have acquired are an old desk from Herrick's Tavern in New Salem and a sign from the old Ballard Tavern in Wendell, which remind one of stage coach days, while a hat and a cap of braided palmleaf are reminders of the days when New Salem had the largest population of any town in Franklin County and the braiding of hats was one of the leading industries.

to become disappointed. As there were already some  
best form of the disease in the country at that time  
the people of the country were not so much  
from Valley Hospital. The first meeting  
of the American Medical Association was held  
in the year 1847 and on the same day the first meeting  
of the South River Valley Hospital was held.  
The American Association was chosen to be the first president of  
the new South River Valley Hospital. The first  
meeting of the American Association was held in the  
year 1847 and on the same day the first meeting  
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Relatives of the late Capt. Wm. B. Kimball of Enfield gave us his Civil War sword and many interesting documents. A Revolutionary War drum is a Dana relic, and among interesting articles from North Dana are records of a Good Templars Society, which once flourished there. From Prescott is an old cemetery gate with hand wrought iron work. The town of Greenwich gave its library to the town of New Salem and with it came articles for the Historical Society. We have many town reports of Dana, Greenwich and Prescott, as well as New Salem, and hope that these files may some day be complete.

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## THE ORANGE HISTORICAL COLLECTION

BY GRACE FRENCH WEYMOUTH

Greetings from our Mount Grace Chapter D. A. R. Historical Rooms. We are all so familiar with your wonderful Memorial Hall, its collection and historic Old Deerfield, that it is almost with humility we send this requested outline of our own society.

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The old Orange Historical and Antiquarian Society, organized Nov. 12, 1895, recorded the names of four influential men and four influential women whose object was "to collect and preserve historical data and antiquities illustrative of the manner of life of the earliest settlers of the town of Orange, and rescue from oblivion any historical matter that otherwise would be lost." A room in the basement of the old town hall was the first home. The society flourished for some years collecting relics of much value and records of especial historic interest to the town.

When the Wheeler Memorial Library was built, Mrs. Wheeler gave the use of the north side of the lower





floor to the society and in 1914 their relics were moved to the new quarters.

A few years before the death of the president of the society, which occurred at the age of 82 years in 1923, the place was closed, the majority of the members having passed away.

In the fall of 1923, through the efforts of Miss Phoebe Lee Hosmer, regent of Mount Grace Chapter D. A. R., permission was given the members to look over the collection and note the condition. In spite of the general air of neglect, dust and cobwebs, we soon realized this wealth of relics should be under constant care.

Five living members of the old society were found, and Jan. 1, 1924 they willingly gave our chapter sponsorship to take up the task so well begun, with ownership when we were able to raise funds to protect these relics of Orange by incorporation.

This work was taken up as a matter of conservation.

By inventory the relics and records numbered 782, and our aims were the same as the original society.

We changed the name to Mount Grace Chapter D. A. R. Historical Rooms, and after renovation and re-arrangement we were ready for public inspection Jan. 28, 1924. From the beginning new exhibits began pouring in, all historical data being constantly sought; but not until Sept. 16, 1931 were we able to become sole owners by incorporation.

Our work is outstanding. When any data either historical or genealogical is wanted we are usually able to supply authentic information, and our requests come from every state in the union, and until this present war, included foreign countries.

Our work with the schools, from grade four through and including the High School, we feel is of much benefit in the knowledge gained first hand of Colonial life, and no admission is charged to groups accompanied by instructors. The same privilege is given the Scouts.





We weathered the disastrous flood of 1936 with many losses that never can be replaced. One sad feature was losing of ten years' work on the "History of South Orange;" ready for its final checking up before publication, and a sodden mass of blank paper when rescued from the files.

The year 1937 brought to us by will the Emma Fitts Bradford collection of over 500 exhibits and records of great value, and outstanding are American marked pewter and early lights not many small societies can boast of. This donation was the final factor in removing to a larger, higher and dryer quarters, and when the hurricane and flood of 1938 brought terror to all our hearts we realized our good fortune.

Each month brings us new exhibits and rare finds and today we number more than 5000 relics. Only by personal inspection can one realize the extent and value of what we have.

The two floors in the barn are open from April 1st to Nov. 1st, but the house is open the year round.

The Orange Historical Society is in the process of formation and when our year ends late in April our chapter will doubtless vote to place our collection in its keeping, with the same aims the old society passed on to us. The collection has grown to such an extent that our small chapter membership feel the financial burden too great and that a broader society should be formed with a large and active membership, including both men and women.





## DEERFIELD WEST OF THE RIVER

BY MINNIE ELLEN HAWKS

By the Dedham Grant in 1665, the seven miles square grant in 1673—which by some quite incomprehensible system of measurement added about seventy square miles to its territory,—and by the additional grant in 1712 which extended its boundaries “nine miles from the Connecticut River into the western woods,” the originally little settlement of Deerfield on the Pocumtuck had expanded its land tenure from the Connecticut on the east to the Northfield line on the north, the Ashfield line on the west, and the Whately line on the south. All this in less than fifty years from an 8000-acre beginning was doing very well—in addition. It should be said that these dates and data, as well as many others in the following pages, are from Mr. Sheldon’s “History of Deerfield.”

Then in 1753 the subtraction began with the setting off of Greenfield. In 1767 Deerfield Southwest petitioned for separation, and became Conway; and in the following year Deerfield Northwest was incorporated as the town of Shelburne. All this took away a large part of the Deerfield holdings westward from the Deerfield River. But there was left a section which in size did not suffer too much in comparison with the original Dedham Grant. Why it was not called “Deerfield West” to agree with the “Deerfield Northwest” and “Deerfield Southwest” terminology I cannot say.

Deerfield west of the river is hilly and much wooded beyond the narrow strip of river meadow land. It is bounded on the west, south and east by the Deerfield River. The border line of Shelburne runs across the north, and also marks the boundary part of the way on the eastern side. The line here is very irregular. At one place there is a very decided indentation into Deerfield territory,—a good big *jog*, in Yankee vernacular. That is because a man by the name of Taylor, whose farm





was on the border, much preferred to be a citizen of Shelburne, and those who were responsible for running the line respected his preference by bending the line so that his farm might lie in the town of his choice. I have always wanted to know what his reasons were for liking Shelburne better than Deerfield, but the story does not say. They have become lost in the past—irrevocably, I am sure. But the *jog* is still there to testify to the obliging disposition of some legislative body of long ago.

Deerfield, west of the river, has three ranges of hills extending in a general north and south direction. The first range, which forms the western horizon line as seen from Old Deerfield, plunges steeply to the river in the vicinity of Stillwater and sweeps to the north, culminating in Deerfield in Arthur's Seat, and stretching on into Shelburne and Greenfield. Arthur's Seat is 965 feet high, according to the latest topographical map. That is considerably higher than East Mountain, Pocumtuck, Old Deerfield's eastern rampart. The view is not very extensive except toward the northeast, where Monadnock lifts its symmetrical mass, and southeast to the Holyoke range. The hills west, northwest, and southwest are too high and too close to allow a distant prospect. These are the Sunsick Hills of the Indians. Viewed from across the river, they lift their slopes, drenched in sunshine, sharply outlined against the sky or brushed over with the lovely hazes of the varying seasons. I suspect the Red Man felt their beauty much as we do—that he, too, lifted his eyes to the hills.

The middle range is not visible from Old Deerfield, and contains no peak of particular note. It rises high, however, and at a point somewhat southwest of Arthur's Seat has an elevation of 821 feet, according to the map. It, too, drops abruptly to the river approximately north of Hoosac Hill in Conway. From the top of an unnamed hill at the southern end of this range there is a really fine prospect. Spread out before one are the uplands of Shelburne, the deep river valley stretching off to the





northwest, the hills of Conway rising on and on toward the higher Berkshires, Mount Tom and the whole blue line of the Holyoke range, Mount Toby, and of course Pocumtuck. The hill is very easy of access, and a good many people enjoy the outlook in the summer and fall. It is not very high, 500 feet or so, but it seems to be in a very commanding position.

The third range slopes to the river where it comes down from Hoosick Tunnel and Whitingham. It is lower than the others and on the western side rougher and steeper. Deer seem to like it, and apparently its ragged slopes are in good favor with foxes. Not much of this range is in Deerfield, for the Shelburne line cuts across it.

Where there are hills there must be the complement of brooks in the valleys between. Of these Shingle Brook, farther west, and what we have always called the Andrews Brook are the largest, both flowing south and meeting the river west of the bend at the head of Stillwater. Shingle Brook comes down from the country north of Shingle Hill, which is just across the line in Shelburne. Years ago, when such things were around about, there was on the little stream a mill for sawing out shingles. The mill and its site have long since vanished, but the name is an abiding reminder. The brook, in the last half-mile or so before it joins the river, plunges over a ledge some forty to fifty feet high into a deep, boulder-strewn ravine, making a sight worth seeing at all times, and particularly at high water—then *white water* there. The Andrews Brook has its origin in the Old World valley. There is nothing especially noteworthy about it that I know of. It just flows “to join the brimming river.” I suppose there used to be trout in these brooks; but nowadays, with the over-numerous fishermen, they are very few and far between.

Two roads run the length of West Deerfield north and south—the “Lower Road,” along where the hills come





down to the meadow land; and the "Upper Road," half or three quarters of a mile west up in the hills. Toward the northern end the old Albany Road starts its climb across Shelburne Mountains. This road was freely used in older days. Now, while not discontinued, it has not been kept up and is not to be recommended for automobiles. It goes through picturesque country, however. In the southern part, a road branches off from the Upper Road to the west through the hills perhaps two miles and a half to South Shelburne. At one place it is built through a swamp—black muck and brown water, and a sort of jungle growth of underbrush and vines and trees standing and fallen. The road used to go around the south end of the swampland; but the grades were very steep and the distance considerable; so, in spite of the difficulties, it was finally carried straight across. At first there was a corduroy road, then stone and gravel, but always there has been a struggle to keep it above the swamp water on both sides.

Some years ago, while a digging was in process in this swamp for some purpose, lengths of wood which had been cut by beavers were brought to light. The teeth marks were plainly discernible. Also, if memory serves me correctly, an Indian dug-out canoe was found, buried no one knows how long. These relics of an era long gone by disintegrated quickly when exposed to the air; but they gave irrefutable testimony as to the ancient history of that particular spot.

Roads of course are corollary to settlements. Mr. Sheldon, in his "History," does not tell much about Deerfield, West, beyond some description of its physical characteristics. There were apparently no settlers across the river in the early days of Deerfield. The reason is obvious. The only hope of approximate safety anywhere in the region during the years from 1665 to about 1750 was in fairly compact settlements, where a certain community of defense was possible. Men needed to have their backs to friends for mutual protection, as





in Old Deerfield. So the settlement did not jump the river, in spite of the fact that there was a strip of good rich meadow land just on the other side. I think it is safe to say that homesteads were not established west of the river until the danger of attack by the Indians was almost assuredly past, and that must have been toward the close of the French and Indian wars. The treaty with France in 1748, which gave to the English all the disputed territory in the north land, removed the menace of the Red Men, which for long and terrible years had hung like a dark cloud over the northern and western hills. With the feeling of security came the impulse to dare the dangers of scattered settlement. This daring was not foolhardiness; for certainly there has come down to us no story in history or legend of any attack by the Indians on a settler's home west of the river.

Who the bold man was who first set up his household gods in the western wilderness I have not yet discovered. Mr. Sheldon, in his genealogical record, has the disconcerting habit of using the expression "settled in Wisdom" or "removed to Wisdom" without giving any dates. Also I don't know where the first house was built. The region was apparently all wooded. At any rate, the grant and boundary documents quoted in the "History" mention continually "the western woods." The men who settled there had to clear their lands, and that was plain hard work and drudgery. In so far did they have a more laborious task than their fellow townspeople on the open, rich meadow lands around Old Deerfield. The beautiful great trees—absolutely primeval forest—had to be cut down, piled, and burned. It sounds to us now like a wicked waste; but they had no alternative, for of course there was no sale for lumber. After that came the back-breaking task of getting rid of the stumps. We see the fair fields now and forget the toil that was necessary to bring them into being. All the spectacular past of the settlement of Deerfield was





over and done with before the trek westward began. A witness to this as a fact is that in the whole length and breadth of the land west of the river there is no single monument or memorial stone such as are so numerous in Old Deerfield and its environs.

There never has been anything like a compact village in this western section. Each man built his house and barns more or less in the middle of his acres, or at least closely adjacent to them. These buildings were strung along the roads at quarter to half-mile intervals—two lines north and south, and scattered along the cross-roads. This arrangement indicates that no danger of attack by man was anticipated then.

The names of the dwellers in Deerfield, West, are, in the main, not the names of those who were east of the river in the early times. Quite evidently the settlers were not, for the most part, members of Old Deerfield families who went across the river to live, but people who came in from other places here and there. In looking through the pages of genealogy in Sheldon's "History," where are put down the names of those who had settled in Deerfield prior to the Revolutionary War, I found only two or three which were common to both sides of the river and from the same families. That is another reason why I am of the opinion that people did not settle across the river—much—until even after 1775. I think there never was a Sheldon, a Stebbins, a Childs, a Barnard, a Hitchcock—just to mention a few of the familiar Old Deerfield names—who made his home in the western part of the town. There were of the name of Allis three generations going back to the early 1800's in West Deerfield and descendants of Allises who lived somewhere east of the river. There is the name of Hawks, which goes rather far back in Old Deerfield history to one Eliezer, who, according to the genealogy, was born in 1655, probably in Windsor, Connecticut, but who came to Deerfield as one of the first permanent settlers. The line comes down through





the years to Nathaniel, to Zadock, whose oldest son, Hilkiah, chose to settle just as far west in the limits of Deerfield as he could go, on land which in some way had come into the possession of his father. Here Hilkiah built his house—a log house at first—and cleared away the forest. The location is just across the river from Hoosac, in the fairly wide and open valley through which Shingle Brook, before mentioned, goes down to the river.

The exact date of Hilkiah's removal across the river I do not know. We seem to have been, as a family, very negligent in keeping records; and it does not matter particularly anyway. He was married in 1783, and I suspect was living there at least as early as that. Over in that corner is a little cemetery, the oldest stone in which is for a daughter of his, bearing the date 1796. The farm passed on to Hilkiah's son Orlando, to Orlando's son James, and to James's son Herman. This is not intended to be a history of the Hawks' family: I should like to add, however, that there is no other dwelling place west of the river that has remained in one family line from the time of the original settlement to the present date.

Another son of Hilkiah, another Hilkiah and brother of Orlando, lived just over the hill east from the first Hawks' house. This is the farm which the Velorus Andrews' family carried on afterwards for many years.

The Hawksees apparently found West Deerfield a satisfactory place in which to live, for another descendant of Eliezer, Obed, also made his home there, but not as far to the west as the first Hilkiah. He built his house beside the Upper Road, near a cross-road leading down to the meadows. It always used to be called the Hawks' Hollow road. The house was a nice old square one, dignified and substantial, in general effect not unlike the old Hawks' homestead in Wapping. It was here that Frederick Hawks, who settled in Greenfield, was born. His son Frederick was until his death a few years





ago a very regular attendant at the meetings of the Memorial Association. Unfortunately the house burned—a pity, for it was of the sort that is an ornament to any community.

Other families which were living in West Deerfield well before 1800, but which had not migrated from the east side of the river were Dewolfs, Robbinses, Joneses, and Chapmans. There may have been others, but I hardly think so. Of all these the Joneses were the most numerous. They lived north and south in Wisdom and in the Nook, but not on the road toward Shelburne. To name just a few of them, not by any means a complete list, there was Amasa, Orson, Phelan, James, Caleb, John, George, Henry, Gurdon, Jenner, Israel, Dennis, Jabez, Jehiel who was apparently the first one, Alexis, Albert, Charles, Leverett, Goland, Moses,—besides very many Jones' women. A study of the genealogy seems to indicate that most of them did not go very far afield when they came to choose their life partners. Jones married Jones time after time, and there were large Jones families. One Jones had a particularly choice assortment of swear-words, in the use of which he was very proficient at the proper time and place; but in the presence of ladies his strongest expletive was "By Ginger!" He never forgot. Of them all George W. Jones was the most prominent in town and county affairs. He had a big farm near the place where the "Red Rocks" cross the river, and along with that carried on a large business as cattle buyer and butcher. He married a Jones who was probably some sort of cousin of his. After she died, he married her niece another Jones. He was selectman for six years, and at one time a member of the General Court. He amassed a very considerable fortune, built what was in its day accounted to be a fine house, and later lost practically everything. His house still stands, but it is fast going to ruin. Of all these Jones' families there is left now in West Deerfield just one single representative.





Other names of later date than those already mentioned are Hutchins, Briggs, Ball, Nims, Lanfair, Newcome, Randall, Wood, and Wise, but most of them have not lasted on till the present time. There is now no Robbins, Hutchins, Dewolf, Wood, Chapman,—the list could go on longer. Mostly Polish names have taken their places.

Not only the people, but in many cases even their houses have gone. Fires have taken their full toll of the old landmarks, some of them perhaps not by unhappy chance. The story used to be that any building in which a certain member of one of these old families had some financial interest had a way of going up in smoke. The coincidence was really very noticeable. Finally one night his own buildings burned, house and barns. The next morning a rooster from his flock was crowing away at a neighbors place, saying, according to the neighbor: "Charlie brought me over here." Only the name was not *Charlie*. That is a substitution for obvious reasons. There are very few of the old houses left, but in most cases the burned buildings have been replaced.

Mr. Sheldon tells at length the story of the incorporation as the town of Greenfield of the northern part of the Deerfield grant. I don't know where that old line would lie in terms of Greenfield of today, but it was somewhat north of the river, so that Cheapside was left to Deerfield. In 1887, however, most of the people in West Deerfield decided that they would be better off if they should be transferred to Greenfield. Therefore a petition was drawn up, circulated for signatures, and presented to the Legislature, to the effect that all of the township of Deerfield west and north of the Deerfield river be set off to Greenfield. I have been told that only two families in West Deerfield were opposed to that separation. The proponents argued that many advantages would come to them in the way of schools, roads, and so forth from connection with the more populous town. The opponents contended that the





separation would work a definite hardship to Deerfield as a town by taking from it a great piece of taxable property, thereby leaving it very small; and that the taxes levied by Greenfield would be higher than those in Deerfield, because the outlying districts would have to help pay for what were distinctly village improvements. The fight was a fairly hot one, and the General Court finally denied the petition. The decision was the occasion for a great ringing of bells and rejoicing on one side of the river and a considerable depression on the other. A few years later another petition, mostly unopposed, gave Greenfield Cheapside and named Sheldon Brook across the northern end of Deerfield, West, as the boundary line. Since that time everyone has seemed to be contented with things as they are.

Of course, with the settlement on the west side of the river, the matter of providing a way across became more urgent from year to year. There were fords, to be sure, three of them; but these crossings were never very dependable, because of the instability of the depth of water. There was also at one time a ferry at Stillwater. The road leading down to it is still traceable just east of the bridge, and the little cove where the landing was made is still there. A ferry was also existent somewhere north of Pine Hill. But many times high water and ice made both fords and ferries unusable. The way around by Cheapside Bridge was long and tedious in horse and buggy days, and the political center was on the east side of the river. Therefore it seemed to the people on the west side that a bridge was not an unreasonable demand on their part. I cannot find that Mr. Sheldon makes any mention whatever of this bridge affair. But sometime previous to 1850, I should think, it was the occasion of much discussion. The arguments *pro* from the west side and *con* from the east side became more and more emphatic in statement. It is easy to imagine what the proponents put forward as reasons why a bridge should be built, but not so easy to see why there should





have been any considerable objection, beyond the cost. So far as I can make out however, that was never offered as a particular reason against the project. Because of the changing bed of the river back and forth across the meadows, and the fact that therefore there was no possibility of solid foundation for abutments and piers anywhere else, Stillwater seemed to be the only feasible location. No one questioned that. Before this time a thriving settlement had sprung up in Conway. The only way for its people to get to the county seat in Greenfield was around through Old Deerfield and Cheapside Bridge. The main objection put forth by the east siders appears to have been that the construction of the bridge would divert much travel from Old Deerfield Street and some business. The consideration of the greatest good to the greatest number had no bearing on the case. Tempers flared on both sides of the river, and harsh words were quite in order. In town meeting one of the objectors in the course of his speech asked: "What will become of Old Deerfield?" He probably did not expect an answer, but one came straightway from a man of blunt language from the west side. He said, "Put a fence across both ends of it and turn it into a hog pasture. It's stocked already." Finally the town voted to build the bridge. The people in West Deerfield had a big celebration, the out-standing feature of which was a huge bonfire, so placed that the whole splendor of it was plainly visible to everyone in Old Deerfield.

The bridge that was built was an old-style covered one, like so many scattered about in New England. It was carried away by a big freshet in October of 1869. It was replaced in 1871 by the one now spanning the river at Stillwater, the first suspension bridge in the state, high enough above the river so that even the tremendous high waters of 1936 and '38 could not touch it. It was constructed by Robling, the man who some years later engineered the construction of the great Brooklyn suspension bridge. If you want to see one of the really





beautiful sights in this immediate vicinity, you should make it a point to be on Stillwater Bridge some evening as the full moon is climbing the eastern sky. The whole picture, with the moonlight reflected across the still water and the quietness and general loveliness of the whole setting, is something not easily forgotten.

As an almost inevitable result of settlement, special names came into use to designate various parts of the tract across the river, and they still persist. "Stillwater" includes both sides of the river near the bridge. The "Nook" is just what the name says, some acres of land on the Lower Road just around the end of the hill east from Stillwater. If the lake were there now, as geologists tell us it used to be, this place would probably be called a *cove*. Once, in a year now long past, a good deal of excitement prevailed in the Nook over the alleged discovery of two or three mineral springs of medicinal value along the foot of the bank there. The discoverer was one of the dwellers in the Nook, and for a while he enjoyed a good deal of publicity. But someone happened along very early one Sunday morning and caught him in the act of supplying those springs with their mineral properties. So that was the end of that bubble.

The country along beyond the Nook northward was frequently spoken of as "Under the Hill" by the older inhabitants. I do not think that this name is much used now and it seems never to have been very definite in its application. These names are easily explained, but that is not true of the others.

Probably "Wisdom" is the most outstanding designation, because of its oddity and the fact that it includes all the Upper Road from Stillwater to the north town line. I have no idea as to the *how* or *why* of its origin. Of course there is the story about the two brothers Wise who settled in this section, from whose name "Wisdom" was derived. But unfortunately for that tale, there was only one Wise in fact, according to the





genealogy he was born in Winchester, New Hampshire, in 1800, and did not settle in West Deerfield until after 1822, probably, as that was the date of his marriage. Only one of his sons, Lucius, stayed on, and all Lucius' family removed from the town. Besides that, the answers to my questioning indicate that originally only the part of that area from the church southward was called "Wisdom," while that to the north was called "Little Hope," and it was north of the church that this one Wise had his home. Not until later were the names "North Wisdom" and "South Wisdom" used. "Little Hope," too, is now beyond explanation, I am afraid, and is no longer in common use.

The story is that there used to be a sort of social cleavage in Wisdom. The "aristocrats" lived north of the church, while those south of it were a little outside the pale. They did not belong to the "best families." But there was always association, even if along with it at times a little condescension.

Mr. Sheldon makes "Wisdom" include all the land west to the river, but in fact the name was never used by those living there to designate the region along the road to Shelburne. That seems never to have had any sectional name. A good many years ago a man by the name of Robbins lived there just across the border line in Shelburne. He had moved down from Heath. A while afterwards one of his old neighbors met him and asked: "How do you like it down there?" "Oh," said Mr. Robbins, "it's perpetual summer there." I tell the story here as evidence that the climate that prevails in the hills west of the river is no less pleasing than that of the lowlands on the east side. Maybe it is more so, for very many times when the valley lands are shrouded in a bank of fog the western hills are in the clear sunshine. Houses used to be scattered along this road. The Andrews farm, mentioned before was extensive. But the house burned and was not replaced, so the good fields became pasture land and are fast growing up to





brush. The names "Bruce Place," "Stickney Place," "Blakesley Hollow" testify that there were other dwellings, but of them only the cellar holes remain.

Sometimes now-a-days the highway across to South Shelburne is spoken of as the "Old World Road," but the older inhabitants never called it that. The real Old World Road turns off into the hills some rods north. It does not cross into Shelburne at all but serves just as a way of entrance into the Old World country. I don't know why it was so called, but the name is inviting. The territory so designated was in the old days, and so properly shall be now, the valley and the slopes on both sides between the first and second ranges of hills along the road as far north as Arthur's Seat, a large acreage. Down through it runs the old "Seven Mile Line," the western line of the seven square miles grant—Mr. Sheldon says it can be traced from Colrain to Whately. No houses are in the Old World now, but five or six cellar holes bear silent witness that once people lived there. In the southern part it is fairly wooded, but in the northern section around Arthur's Seat great sweeps of beautiful pasture land open up. The whole region has a fascination all its own.

In the years gone by West Deerfield people were always very social-minded. They liked to visit in the good old way of going to spend the afternoon and staying to supper, even without a previous invitation. They all did it, and all enjoyed it, those visited as well as those visiting. All the latch-strings were always out, and there was spontaneous as well as planned hospitality. A very popular sort of gathering was the "surprise party." In West Deerfield it was an expression of the utmost good will; and the size of the parties was in direct proportion to the popularity of the victim—though he never thought of himself in that light. They were a proof of neighborliness and afforded a lot of good fun.

In addition, however, there were regular social gatherings. For many years a society known as the "Social





Union" carried on, with sociability as its prime objective. I think it must have originated in the late '60's, and it continued for many years. The meetings were held regularly at the homes of the various members, and everybody who was physically able attended, whether the weather was fair or foul. Those were the days when people were not loath to open their houses to parties of this sort. The "Social Union" had a secondary purpose, too. Community houses are quite the thing now. But before the establishment of social centers was for the most part anything but a vague idea, these people of Wisdom were planning just that thing. The "Social Union," by means of a small tax on each one attending the meetings, set out to raise money to build a community house. To be sure they never did build it, for before their fund reached a sufficient amount, the Social Union ceased to be. The reason of its dissolution was much the same as that for the giving up of the church services. Many of the old families died out or moved away, and the new ones which took their places had no common interests with those who remained. So it could not be otherwise. The considerable sum they had raised through the years was finally utilized to make over the old church so that it could be used also as a social center.

The story of the church in West Deerfield is not a particularly happy one. Mr. Sheldon tells of its beginning. In 1787 there was organized "The Baptist Church of Shelburne and Deerfield," the Deerfield indicated being the section west of the river. In 1809 this Wisdom part of the society agreed to build a meeting-house, which was finished in 1810. After a while the Shelburne people withdrew from the Society, and there followed a reorganization under the title of "The First Baptist Society in Deerfield." Apparently peace and harmony did not prevail as time passed, for in 1823 or thereabout a part of the congregation seceded, and formed a second society. In 1834 the first society by a majority of one





voted to dissolve; but a council, meeting that same year, decreed that this could not be done by a single vote. Then the two societies reunited, and there is no further record of any particular internal dissensions.

There were ministers Martin, Dalrymple, Hale, Bills, Frary, and Pease, as named by Mr. Sheldon, but none of them seems to have stayed long enough really to know his congregation. In the late '60's and through the '70's there was settled in Wisdom an English physician, Doctor Walmsley. He and his two-wheeled gig and his faithful horse Dolly came to be widely known in the surrounding towns. Whether he was also an ordained minister I do not know; but for a good many years he was the regular preacher for the Wisdom church. It was a case where attention to physical and spiritual welfare went hand in hand. Later Dr. Francis Robbins used to come in the summer from his home in Greenfield to conduct afternoon meetings there until his health no longer permitted. Some other Greenfield ministers also helped. Mr. Anderson, known throughout the county, gave his services for a fairly long period; and some of the ministers of the Orthodox Church in Old Deerfield accepted as part of their duties the supplying of that pulpit. It was a losing struggle, however. In these later years the infiltration of Polish people into Wisdom, with their church interests in South Deerfield or Greenfield, has made it impossible for the Society to carry on, so that now the church is closed. But it did its part valiantly in its day. Until a very few years ago, a group of its faithful women still kept up the meetings of this Ladies' Aid Society.

In the time before the centralization and consolidation of schools there was a North Wisdom and a South Wisdom school house. The north one still stands where it was originally placed, out a little on the old Albany Road before it starts up the hill—now-a-days more or less “a ragged beggar sunning.” The first location of the South School was at the top of the hill where the road





starts across to Shelburne. I suppose it was set here because at the time of its building there were families along that road, as well as those who were living in the Old World, so that the position of the school house was fairly central. Years later it was moved to the foot of the hill, and was in use there till it burned. Then a new house, said at the time to be a model modern type for a district school, was built in the Nook, as apparently the center of population had shifted again. It had been in use only a few years when the transportation of the children to the graded schools of Deerfield and South Deerfield began. Of course in West Deerfield as in all other country schools in the earlier half of the nineteenth century, the teachers had to go through the ordeal of "boarding around," and sometimes their experiences were anything but pleasant. It all depended on the family.

Within the bounds of Deerfield, West, are three cemeteries—North Wisdom, on the Albany Road; South Wisdom, by the church; and the Hawks' cemetery, close to the Shelburne line.\* Here, as the names and dates attest, the "forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

"The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
The swallow, twittering from his straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, and the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Nor busy housewife ply her evening care;  
No children run to lisp their sire's return.  
Or climb his knee the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glibbe hath broke;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!"

\*There are also graves, including a Blakely, in a pasture northerly of the former West Deerfield railroad station. Editor.





Many times people travel far and wide in search of beauty, when there is a whole treasure of it close at hand. They assume that as a matter of course whatever is near is entirely commonplace, unless there is some distinctly spectacular element involved. "Distance lends enchantment to the view." Thus it is with Deerfield, west of the river. To its utmost limit as the crow flies it is probably not more than three and a half miles from Old Deerfield. By road and automobile it is an easy fifteen minute ride. It is country beautiful in all sorts of variations. There is highland and lowland, the charm of running water, sylvan glades and great open spaces, the beauty of the far view, and that of some little thing within reach of your hand. If it's color that you want, the changing seasons offer it there in full measure, from the red maples of spring to the last oak leaf of the autumn and the white and greens and grays of winter. You might go further and fare worse.

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## A WOMAN'S EXPERIENCE IN THE MINISTRY

BY REVEREND MARGARET B. BARNARD

The motives that lead women to enter the ministry are probably much the same as those which influence men—eagerness to develop the spiritual life, a desire to serve humanity, and in many cases it may be that the studious side of a minister's life would have its strong appeal. In my own case the desire came gradually.

Born in Maine and educated in a French school in New Orleans, I taught French ten years in two very fine private schools in Boston, and I had reasonable success in preparing students for college and the Institute of Technology. Teaching was a great delight to me and I was very fond of my pupils, and I consider this experience an excellent preparation for my work in the ministry.





Among the influences leading me towards the ministry was the example of several very fine women ministers, real pioneers in their way: Mary Safford, Ida Hultin, Anna Garlin Spencer, Eleanor Gordon, Caroline Bartlett Crane. Their work was a great inspiration to me and I followed the account of it very eagerly long before any decision on my part was made or even contemplated. Then a class in Old and New Testament criticism interested me very much in the modern study of the Bible and was another factor.

The difficulties however of securing an education were great at that time. Meadville was the only Unitarian theological school which admitted women, and, as the distance was great, and I could not leave my elderly parents, it was out of the question to consider it. Harvard would admit women for one course but they had to matriculate at Radcliffe and pay more for the one course than the students would for the entire course. I declined to do it. Tufts College would admit me but, as I had to earn my living while studying, the arrangement of hours was impossible. Finally I took one course in New Testament work at the Boston University School of Theology where I received much courtesy. In despair, I went to the dean of the Harvard Theological School and asked him if he could provide me with a tutor. In a few days he informed me that Mr. Willard Reed would come to my home once a week. It seems that when the dean asked Mr. Reed, he said to him, "How would you like to go to Chelsea and start a little divinity school?" and so the classes were always called the Chelsea Divinity School by Mr. Reed and Mr. Reccord. The divinity school certainly required very high standards of its pupil and she, being fearful of falling behind the record of the men, worked many hours, both night and day. Later on when Mr. Reccord became the minister at Chelsea, he was told by Mr. Reed that if he needed any help in social service work, he had better turn to me because





Reed had never dared to tell me how much more I had read than he had.

My first sermon was preached in West Somerville, supplying the pulpit for a ministerial friend. Just before the sermon, a note was handed to me saying that the church would be closed for the summer after this service. I was grateful that it had not come immediately after the sermon, for then I should have been sure that I was responsible for the closing edict.

One of our former ministers who was in charge of a Salem church was rash enough to ask me to preach for him, and I did so with fear and trembling. The church is of a fine old Gothic type and the pulpit was very high. As Mr. T. was very tall, he did not need any assistance in facing his audience, but there happened to be two heavy blocks of wood in the pulpit for the use of ministers under six feet, and when I took my part in the service he put down these blocks and when he took part, he raised them. It was rather a ridiculous performance of which the congregation was entirely ignorant, and if I hadn't been too nervous to see anything funny in it, I should have been convulsed. But I lived through it.

Another time at Marblehead, again I found one of these old-fashioned pulpits. The congregation did not see me until I arose for the opening part of the service. In the audience, I learned afterwards, was a lady who was greatly opposed to women in the ministry. She had always declared she would not listen to one. But I was there, and after some struggle, she discovered that her innate politeness would not allow her to leave. I preached several times after that and she was always in attendance at the services!

In 1897, I was received into the fellowship of the Unitarian Ministry and was ordained at my home church in Chelsea. The service was a very beautiful and impressive one, the young women of the church acting as ushers and beautiful flowers being received





from the Chelsea Woman's Club of which I had just been elected president. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Anna Garlin Spencer, of Providence, and the minister who gave me the right hand of fellowship spoke very earnestly, concluding with, "I give you my hand and my heart goes with it." Again I did not see anything funny, but my friends tormented me afterwards about receiving an offer of marriage in public.

A few days after my ordination, I was asked to go to Warwick, Massachusetts, for a Sunday service. I knew nothing about the place except that it was nine miles from the railroad. So leaving the train at Orange, I found a stage for Warwick. In it were two other ladies, one rather large and another very slender and elderly. They discovered immediately that they had many friends in common and when about half way to Warwick the elderly lady left the stage, the other lady turned to me cheerfully and said, "Well, perhaps we have some friends in common."

I hesitated, then said, "That is a little doubtful as I am a stranger here."

"Are you going to Warwick?" she asked.

I said, "Yes."

"Have you friends there?"

"No."

"Are you going to stay long?"

"Probably not."

"Where are you going to stay?"

"Really, I don't know."

She soon gave me up as a very unsatisfactory source of information, and turned her attention to the driver. After many inquiries about the town and the people, she said, "Is the church on the hill open?"

"Yes."

"Who is going to preach there tomorrow?"

"Wa-al, I don't know unless it be this lady next ye."

Tableau and great astonishment! It was the first hint I had that the driver knew me. The acquaintance





with the lady, thus begun, ripened into a very pleasant friendship, and during my stay of two months in Warwick, her home was a very delightful resting place for me.

Warwick was an interesting town and the people were very cordial and friendly. There had been some trouble in the church before I went there, so in making parish calls I had to avoid all personalities. My general subject of conversation was the beauties of Warwick and I wondered many times if the people compared notes and thought me utterly lacking in ideas. The congregation grew steadily while I was there, and when my two months were ended, the committee would have been very glad to have me remain for the winter, but I could not think of taking my father and mother and aunt to so small a town, and the presidency of the Woman's Club and other ties kept me in Chelsea for another year. But I went back the next summer and I would have gone for the third time if I had not received a call to the church in Chelsea. All I need say here is that Warwick was a very lovely introduction to the people and scenery of Franklin County and I recall the experience with a great deal of pleasure.

The Chelsea pastorate was a very interesting one and the Boston and local ministers all joined in doing all they could to help me. I became a member of the Boston Association of Ministers—an unexpected and utterly unsought for honor on my part—and was the only woman ever to become a member. But the ministers certainly gave me a most friendly welcome and it was one of the great privileges of my life.

During my pastorate, I gave particular attention to the young people and their needs. A Boys' Club studied Constitutional Government in practical ways, organizing as city officials, and studying real problems. The boys were keenly interested and the success was great. An older group, among other things, gave a fine art exhibit. The difficulties of my work in Chelsea





were increased by severe illness in my family and at the close of the second year I realized that it would be impossible for me to carry on the church and the home. So my resignation was offered and accepted.

In January of the next year, I had an opportunity to preach in Rowe, Massachusetts. To reach it I had to start Saturday morning from Boston and spend five hours in a slow local train. About 4 o'clock, I reached Zoar, the railroad station for Rowe, and there waited an hour for the stage. The four-mile ride was all uphill, behind a slow horse, and it was dark when we arrived at Mrs. Julia Browning's hospitable home. She welcomed me most cordially, and she and her son did much for my comfort. The thermometer was well below zero, and my room on the ground floor had no fire, but it was heated a little from the next room.

The following morning the services were held in the town hall with a small but rather interesting congregation awaiting me. Something about the place appealed to me very strongly. The town was beautiful in its winter dress and in spite of the cold, I enjoyed every moment. Nevertheless I did not feel that I ought to accept the invitation that was extended to me to go there because of my parents. After I returned home, the people in Rowe wrote quite frequently urging me to return. I had many struggles over the problem. Personally I was strongly attracted to the people and the work, but had I any right to take my parents, both of whom were over eighty, to a small town far away from all their friends and relatives? Many hours were spent trying to solve the problem and at last one of my ministerial friends suggested that I ask the parish to take me for six months. "Then," as he said, "you will know whether you want to stay and how it will affect your parents." The parish accepted the proposal and in April, 1902, I started for Rowe with bag and baggage, and my cat. When I arrived at Zoar, the conductor said to me in a very pleasant voice, "Have you all the





bundles?" and I wondered whether it was sarcasm or kindly interest. The neighbors and parishioners welcomed me most kindly and the congregation was much larger than I had been lead to anticipate. I had heard that the parish had about decided to use whatever small funds they had as long as they lasted and then close the church. But after the first summer I heard nothing more of any funerals. Bills were paid and the interest only of funds was allowed to be used. Among my serious problems, however, was that of creating new courage, not only in the church but in the community. A former minister had taken a very pessimistic view of rural life and had written very scathing denunciations of the churches, the people, and the activities. So my first duty was to create not only in Rowe, but in the surrounding county, a new ideal of rural life. This became the permanent motive of all preaching and lecturing during the fourteen years of my ministry there.

All matters concerning rural life interested me greatly. I came in contact with the Massachusetts State College Agricultural Department and I was active in the Grange and became the secretary of the committee on country churches of the Massachusetts Federation of Churches. I also came in contact with workers in various fields that touched rural life, and the State College frequently sent students and others to Rowe to consult with me.

But to return to the church, my experience as a teacher and a church school worker had made me recognize the great importance of education for the children of the community. My predecessor had done nothing in that line. As I looked around at first, I saw only four children, but I felt that four children deserved an education as much as four hundred, so I started a school at once, telling the children stories of the Bible and interesting them in many ways. One little girl became so absorbed in the story of the manna





being dropped upon the Israelites in the wilderness that she asked her father if he could not procure her some. The women were organized into an Alliance group and became very much interested in the work, not only in Rowe, but elsewhere.

As I studied the region and its possibilities, I felt that a church situated as ours was should be helpful to the communities around it. I asked my parish committee if it would not be well to have a few meetings during the summer in outlying school houses or other places. They entered heartily into the idea and arranged services for me in Heath, in Zoar, in Whitingham, Vermont, and in other places. These services were kept up for most of the years I was there and for two or three years I held regular monthly services at Monroe Bridge, a small manufacturing town about four miles from Rowe but separated by a hill which descended one thousand feet in one mile. My trips there were frequently very difficult and even perilous and had it not been for the skill of my driver, we should have had many accidents. One day as we started down the hill we found an icy coating under the snow. The horses were smooth shod and we slid most of the distance. As we approached the village, there was a sharp turn with only a weak railing to protect us from dropping to the railroad several feet below and from there into the river. We accomplished the feat and made the turn safely, but on our return we walked up the hill for exercise.

A rural conference was held in 1910 under the auspices of the various organizations in the village and while it was not so largely attended as we had hoped, it attracted much attention and brought new ideas for rural activity. The Springfield Republican thought it important enough to print the speeches in full and each evening called me by telephone for further information. An annual report of the church was also published in full in the same paper.





As the earlier years of my ministry passed, it became increasingly evident that there was great need of a church building. The old church on the hill, which dated from 1845, was in a very dilapidated condition and it was impossible to heat it in the winter. So for the first five years of my ministry, we held services in the town hall and another building near at hand. We had many meetings and many discussions over the problem of what could be done—whether the old church could be removed to another location or a new one built. While the discussion was going on and because of lack of funds there seemed no likelihood of anything being done, I received a letter one day from Mrs. Mary P. Wells Smith, of Greenfield, and upon opening it a check for four thousand dollars fell out. Looking at it, I saw that it was a gift from Preserved Smith's youngest and only living grandson, suggesting that we make the church a memorial for his grandfather. Later another thousand was added to the gift and we began to consider ways and means. As there is very little level land in Rowe, the question of location was quite important, but on the eleventh of May, 1907, ground was broken for a new stone church. On July 7th the corner stone was laid with appropriate ceremonies. This corner stone caused us wild excitement for in spite of promises, it did not arrive at Zoar until the last train Saturday afternoon, and the stone had to be transported four miles up the hill to Rowe. But it arrived. Taking part in the dedication was Mrs. Constance Smith Homer, great-granddaughter of Preserved Smith, and the corner stone itself was laid by a great-great-grandson, Joseph Warren Homer, Jr. Mrs. Smith also gave a paper and the great-granddaughter of Hosea Ballou took part in the services. The building was dedicated, free from debt and with three hundred dollars remaining in the bank, on November 14, 1907, with a large number of prominent ministers and guests present from out of town. The windows were memorials





to former families of Rowe, and many pews were also memorials. Dr. Sunderland, of Hartford, said of the building, "This is Rowe's 'Westminster Abbey.' "

Among the many duties that fell to the minister of the church were funerals of former Universalist people and other liberals within a radius of about fifteen miles. In all kinds of weather and with terrible roads, we had to travel these long distances by sleigh and buggy.

After fourteen years in Rowe, it seemed to me that my work was ending. Everything was serene, there was no debt, the parish had a fine new building, and the people were united,—apparently there was little more than I could really do unless the town itself could become economically stronger. It was a great sorrow to me even to consider leaving, for I loved the people and the country region and I had every reason to believe that the people reciprocated. But I was not growing younger and it seemed that if there was to be a change, it should come when all was moving along well.

Just at this critical moment there came a call to the church at Bernardston, Massachusetts. This was the third call that I had received from that church, and after many anxious days and sleepless nights I told the people of my offer and its probable acceptance. Everyone was very much upset and for weeks I was subjected to a barrage of entreaty to remain. But I felt that the move was a wise one for the church and me, and I took charge of the society in Bernardston in September, 1916. In the invitation to the church at Bernardston, Dr. Pierce, chairman of the committee, had used the expression, "You have put Rowe on the map. Now we want you to put Bernardston there." The salary was still small, but I was nearer the railroad and more conveniently located for more activities.

My pastorate at Bernardston covered six years—very hard ones because of the World War and all the consequent work for the Red Cross, of which I was





chairman for the town, and active in many other causes of the time. Then my household cares were made more difficult by the fact that a valued housekeeper was taken ill and died soon after I went there. With a very large house on my hands and two young girls to care for, I found it also very difficult to secure any competent help, so much time and energy had to be given to the household.

Among the problems facing the society was that of the church school. This had been allowed to run down and it took two years of very hard work to bring it up to a position where it was worthy of the church, and to maintain it at a high degree of efficiency for the years I was there. There was also some sickness on my part, and one winter my physicians sent me to California for a complete change. However, they wouldn't dare to trust me without a church, so I had charge of the Redlands Church during the five months I was away. Following the war, we had a terrible epidemic of influenza which brought great anguish and suffering to many families, and which was not only very wearing to the minister but also a great strain on her time and strength.

But there was one great privilege there. Bernardston was fortunate in having a will to cooperate among her three churches. This had been brought about largely through the long pastorate and fine spirit of Rev. Eugene Frary, Pastor of the Federated Church. Three times a year our churches met for union services, and Mr. Frary and I were constantly in conference over local affairs.

In the summer of 1922, I received a letter from the chairman of the Southern Committee of the Alliance of Unitarian Women asking me to consider a call to the work in North Carolina. I had long been a member of this committee and very much interested in the work. But it was the death of a dear friend who had spent many years there that brought the matter to a crisis for me. As much as I disliked to leave Bernardston,





and Massachusetts, I felt that I had no ties that bound me, and it might be my duty to take up this very difficult work. So I went to North Carolina in September, 1922, and remained there in very active work until the summer of 1927.

During that time I had charge of three churches at distances from twelve to twenty miles away, over roads that were often almost impassible from mud to sand. I supervised the school, and cared for the household, while attending to all business and correspondence. One year we held a tonsil clinic in our cottage. Through the generosity of friends, we were able to have a specialist, a trained nurse, our regular physician and two practical nurses to assist us. Eleven children had their tonsils removed, and all the operations were very successful. A new and much larger school house was built, our bungalow enlarged, and the teaching force greatly increased, one addition being a business course. Beside these activities, much was done to promote a cleaner social life. A Girl Scout troop was carried on, and efforts to promote better health and improved living conditions were made.

When I started North in 1927, I was far from well, and on reaching Greenfield was taken to the hospital where I remained for six months suffering from typhoid fever followed by a relapse. And thus ended my active work as a minister.

In conclusion let me say that although there are fewer women ministers today in active service than there were when I began my ministry, I still believe there is a place and a great opportunity for women to help the world in this way. It is unfortunate that a certain prejudice prevents women from advancing to the larger churches, for no matter how successful they may be, they rarely receive a call to the churches that would pay a really living salary. My own personal experience was so happy a one that I would like to see other women doing a similar work, and I hope that the





time will come when the prejudices of race, color, and sex will be forgotten and ability to do the work will be the real standard of service.

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## THE "LIVERY OFFICE"

BY FRANCIS NIMS THOMPSON

Strange as it may seem to the present generation, people "drove" before these days of the automobile. Men of leisure used to come with their families to the old Mansion House to take the "hundred beautiful drives" from Greenfield, elm-shaded shire town of our County of Franklin. Seated in Concord buggy, phaeton or carryall, they drove horse or pair over our country roads, following rivers that meander through the valleys and brooks that hasten down the hills of western Massachusetts.

In those less hurried days—when the driver did not say to his wife "that's a nice little village ahead" and be answered "Yes, that was a pretty place"—there were driving horses and livery stables; and appurtenant to these were "livery offices," social centres of a sort: in fact of many sorts; sorts as widely diverse as the several proprietors and their circles of friends.

When the livery business was thriving there were many stables. One, in Greenfield, easterly of the Main street schoolyard, was connected with the Elm House: I associate with it Charles P. Aldrich and Henry Couillard. Squires and Hager were earlier proprietors. The American House stable was in the rear of the hotel which was later given the family name of the illustrious general, Charles Devens,—once a Greenfield lawyer,—whose statue stands near the state house. Haley's stable was behind his house and barber shop on School street. As a boy I patronized that shop, read the notice about clipping horses which was hung beside the mirror, and wondered how Haley classified that part of his activi-





ties. Ed Fowler and Frank Gerrett ran the Franklin House stable on Clay Hill.

"Sam" Payne had a large stable, reached from Federal street, in the rear of the Mansion House; and Edward Strecker had another,—formerly conducted by Fred Graves and later by Dr. Mark L. Miner,—a veterinary surgeon,—on the south side of Main street. Strecker's stable was approached through an arch beneath the wooden part of his block of stores. East of that block was the Miller Block, and between this and "Nims' Livery Office" was the driveway to Nims' Stable, an assemblage of big barns occupied by some sixty horses. The only horses now to be seen at the location of these two stables are those which cavort across the "movie" screen of the Garden Theatre. But none of these are comparable with my uncle's "Old Herod;" or with Frank Pond's driving horse, which I was sometimes allowed to exercise to keep him within bounds.

Could there really have been seven stables? Why, of course; probably more: Yes, Jackson had one up on the east side of Federal street. There was a slight physical resemblance between Charles B. Jackson and Lucius Nims, in that both were large men with good complexions and each wore a sandy moustache. Some small farmer stopped my uncle, Mr. Nims, and asked if he might borrow a mowing machine. Nims had none, but his Yankee reply was "Do you know where it is?"—to which the farmer answered "Yes, right under the shed." "All right, you may take it" Uncle Lucius said. Some time later Mr. Jackson complained that his mowing machine had been gone for a month; someone had come right into his shed and taken it away without saying a word!

To run a stable successfully—to survive as a livery man—one had to know not only horseflesh, an accomplishment beyond the ability of most men, but he needed to know, and know well, human nature. Proprietors of stables achieved differing degrees of perfec-





tion in these arts and in a third requirement, the shrewd purchase of hay and more particularly of grain, a staple more speculative than stocks and bonds. Lucius Nims and Arthur D. Potter were masters of that science.

During the winter Main street was a convenient race-track upon which the horsemen of Greenfield might demonstrate the comparative speed of their favorites, hitched to a single sleigh,—rigid from nose of horse to tip of runner; and almost any fine day in summer Aldrich and Couillard, Hager and "the old judge," Charles Hoyt and Anson Browning, the clothing dealer, might be seen on their sulkeys, driving back and forth on the Colrain road.

It is said that Couillard once made a blind swap with another jockey and brought a saw-horse as his part of the trade, but confessed himself beaten at his own game when he saw the beast which the other fellow was leading.

One of the horse-lovers was exercising his trotting mare on West Main street when he saw "Hen" Couillard walking west. "Want to ride?" "Depends on where you're going." "Going anywhere you want to go." "Thought I'd go down to Euclid Owen's."—That was between Main street and the "Uncle Jimmy Newton" covered bridge across Green river.

"Wait a minute!" said Couillard, as he got out and started down the driveway leading to Owen's barn. He opened the door and went in. Soon he came out, leading an old horse—saddle-backed but well fed. As he came opposite the house-door, it flew open and Owen appeared, in his shirt-sleeves and with his white hair standing on end, as it usually did. "Here, Couillard, where you goin' with that hoss?" "I'm aleadin' of it off" said Henry. "Well, I bought that hoss at the auction a month ago," said Owen. "I know you did," acknowledged Couillard, "but I got a claim-note on this horse: just thought I'd let you fat him up a little."

Whether accurate or not, that is a typical story of the





Yankee horse-trader. We must return to "Nims' livery office," as it was called. Everyone, who was anybody, did return to it. There was no choicer fraternity in this region than those who dropped in from time to time to talk with the proprietor: doctors, lawyers and ministers, and others not less well known and respected.

Many professional men in those days were decidedly "horsey." Reverend Henry Hyde knew well the ways of those beasts. When he drove to a ministerial gathering at a country town with a "pulling" horse, he backed the horse into the horse-shed and tied it to the post. It is said that several other ministers, who did not have horses with the same bad habit but who knew the visiting minister to be a superior horseman, hitched their steady old nags in similar fashion. Reverend Charles Merriam was a frequent visitor at the livery office, and Reverend G. Glenn Atkins\* and my uncle particularly enjoyed each other's company, despite the disparity in age.

Dr. Adams Calhoun Deane—how exactly such a name dates a man!—was in and out of the office for many years. I remember going to his barn (on the lot west of the present post-office) to see two litters of pug dogs—curious little animals with tightly curled tails and much-corrugated muzzles. Uncle Lucius, not instantly recalling the breed's name, spoke of it as "the dog with faces at both ends."

Naturally, when Dr. Deane needed a new horse it was L. Nims who selected the animal; but once, when the doctor was away from home, he had an opportunity to pick up an extraordinary horse at a bargain. He was much pleased with the horse, and considerably with himself: he wanted Lucius to see that horse, and was disappointed that when he drove up to the office the boss was not about. However, he hitched his treasure, and went about his business—or perhaps he joined "Bak" Noyes, "Rashe" Sanderson and Charlie Lowell

\*Read his appreciative comment in P. V. M. A., vol. IX, page 200 (1941 Annual).





about the stove in the drug store around the corner on Bank Row.

Meanwhile the horseman returned, noticed the new horse in the old buggy, and also noticed that the animal's weight was on his off fore foot, while the near foot rested daintily on its tip. When Nims picked up that foot and examined it his suspicion that the horse was lame was confirmed. As he felt he should tell its owner, and as the doctor was not in sight, Uncle Lucius stepped into the office, selected a crook-necked cane and hung it on the shaft next the lame foot. Then he quietly and completely disappeared. Of course the doctor recognized the truth and force of the silent comment, when he returned to the horse that he loved—and you know human nature! But the two men did not meet during the next few days, and by that time the temperature had abated.

Judge David Aiken was one of those who used to drop into Nims' office to smoke a cigar with my uncle. Their tastes in cigars, or their appropriations for tobacco, differed; and Uncle Lucius preferred furnishing the cigars to smoking one of the judge's. Once, when the judge drew first, his host politely said "Good cigar; where'd you get it?" "Kellogg's: one cent," tersely said the judge. Kellogg's grocery was between Judge Aiken's home and office. When Judge Aiken and L. Nims discussed men and affairs shrewd comments were exchanged.

The ruling passion of "the old judge," as David Aiken was called, was the race horse. He died in 1895 at the age of ninety, having made few concessions to Time. I well recall meeting his son, the chief justice, at Arms' corner (near their law office) and inquiring for his father, whom I had heard was ill. Judge John started to say, with a rather long face, "Well, Father's pretty. . ."—when down Main street came the old judge in his buffalo overcoat, seated behind his trotter; and we both grinned.





"John Aiken" was a familiar name in our family and as a little boy I used to carry flowers from his mother to mine, both living on west Main street. He and my uncle used to take many drives together to the towns about, often for a substantial meal at some country inn, or to spend an evening in Deerfield with "Billy" Williams, another of the frequenters of Nims' social centre.

Mr. Williams had his preferences, and more especially his dislikes, among his acquaintances; and his speech was quick and to the point. While sitting in the office one day he saw a doctor's buggy go down the driveway to the barn. "There's Dr. Stetson, said he; "He's been down to see Old G.: I'm going to find out how he is." Off he pattered to the rear door. On his return my uncle asked "Well, how's G.?" "Nothing encouraging; nothing encouraging;" said "Billy"—He's getting better."

I think that his tartness was but a condiment with which he seasoned life. The chestnut burr has a sweet heart; and when I was a boy Mr. Williams gave me a wonderful top which, when properly poked as it spun, performed the miracle of changing its color.

One day Mr. Williams showed unmistakable signs of a cold, and my uncle sympathized with him. Billy said "I don't mind the cold so much as I do the way I got it—from that damned toad." The fact was that he, an insurance agent, had a desk in the same room in "Sanborn's Block" with a newspaper man who, being constitutionally chilly, had a smelly little oil stove by his desk, and the wick of that stove and the sash of Billy's window had been going up in unison but not in harmony.

An old local tale is of a heated discussion between Billy and Captain Ephriam—as to whether it would be the height of folly or the only reasonable course for their sister, Miss Eliza, to keep a cow if she survived them; at the close of which argument each took his candle and retired with offended dignity to his own chamber.

Mr. Williams was a devout Episcopalian, and I think





that his cousin, who did not attend that church, will vouch for this dialogue. "Good morning, Cousin William." "How do you do, Belle, where are you going?" "I'm starting for church, William." "I wish to God you were; I'm afraid you're only going to meeting." Another story, less well authenticated, relates his profanity when interrupted in his prayers.

On one of the frequent visits to Old Deerfield my uncle was much entertained by a brief tilt between Billy and John, or Judge Aiken. It was all one: John or Judge. John was always "as dignified as a judge" and the chief justice never ceased to be our very good friend, John Aiken. The little encounter was this: John, feeling very mischevous, said soberly, but sure that he was poking a hornets' nest, "Good evening, Mr. Williams; and how is your friend F.....today?" Quick as a flash came the retort: "Oh, very nicely, thank you; very nicely; and how is Mr. G.?"—naming a connection of John's for whom he knew the judge felt equal contempt.

Inquiries along those lines ended at that point; but when the two friends got in the buggy to return to Greenfield, one said "You didn't get far with your inquiries about Billy's friends" and the other replied "I didn't see anything so very funny about that;" and Lucius chuckled. An another such visit the joke was played too quickly, and the tables were turned. The two pals drove into the Williams yard one evening and hitched the horse to the corner of the shed—about where the Deerfield Academy business office now is. Billy's chamber window flew up and his voice called sharply "Who's there?" "Oh, Charlie H..."replied Lucius, naming a man he knew to be one of Mr. Williams' favorite antipathies. Down went the window: Bang! No one came to the door: the callers knocked; still no one came. Finally the horse was unhitched and driven home.

By the way, it was that same Charles H. whose con-





duct at a country hotel occasioned one of Judge Aiken's droll jokes. The telephone was a rarity then, and was not lightly approached; but C. H. had come to Greenfield from the city, had some money and perhaps was not unwilling to impress the loafers about the hotel office. At any rate he was there with a friend, and in the presence of Aiken and Nims called up his home in Greenfield and asked his wife to get from his basement a bottle of venerable vintage and have it put on ice so that he and his friend might partake of its contents on their return.

His audience was quite impressed, and Aiken felt that something in the nature of a commentary was required; so the judge stepped to the phone, twisted vigorously the crank which rang its bell and, holding down the hook, pretended to hold a conversation with his sister Harriet at their home. "I wish you'd go down cellar," said he, "and behind the potato bin you'll find a salt codfish: please put it a-soak: I'm bringing Lucius home to supper.

There was a time, still visible in retrospect, when if one wished to communicate with a friend he went to his home or mailed him a note. Somehow there was more time, in that period before most of our time-saving inventions, than there seems to be now; and some of that extra time was utilized (I will not say wasted) in playing jokes, more or less practical and sometimes more or less crude. Probably William Blake Allen could tell of some perpetrated about the cracker-barrel in Henry & Smead's grocery store. The more firm the friendship the more anxious was each to "get something" on the other fellow which their mutual friends might enjoy.

Once, when the two men I have mentioned were dining together at a country tavern and the landlord's wife, who had cooked an excellent meal, was serving these much respected acquaintances of her husband, John improved the opportunity to reproach Lucius for alleged failure to pay his wash-woman, urging that she was a





poor woman and needed the money. "Glad you spoke of that, John," said Lucius; "I had meant to tell you that your wife failed to send home one of my best shirts with last week's wash."

John said to Lucius, one day, after some reference had been made to the sensitive throat of one and the nervous indigestion of the other, "With your throat and my stomach, we ought to make one pretty good man." "I guess so, John, if we could find a head somewhere," replied Lucius. Two brainy men, both careful in speech, they hardly seemed enough unlike to be such constant friends, but each found something especially attractive in the other.

Rufus Packard, banker, was one of the habitués of the old office. He was a nervous little man, and strictly accurate. Also a horse-lover, he once told my uncle in considerable detail the precise moment he left Mansion House corner, driving up Main and High streets, across Silver and down Federal, and how very fast his mare trotted. "What time was it when you got back?" asked Nims. "Oh, I don't know: I don't know exactly" said Packard, "but she went awful fast." He is remembered as also driving a pair of blacks. The Packard National Bank was opposite the livery office, and he was often watched to see if he would go back once or twice to make sure the bank door had been locked. An Ashfield horseman and farmer with whom Mr. Nims had a warm friendship, reported the short time in which the farmer's son George had driven "that new mare" to Northampton and back. "That was pretty fast work; wasn't it?" said Lucius. The honest farmer hesitated; then replied "I'd have thought so if it had been Charlie that told me."

In "hoss and buggy days" both Nims' stable and the Mansion House stable had a number of imposing hacks, used principally for weddings and funerals. Of course a really great occasion required the combined resources of both stables, so it made little difference which "got





the wedding" or funeral; but customers had their preferences, likes and dislikes. Once a large church wedding called for the liveliest efforts of all the hacks in town and time was of importance. One of Nims' drivers on one of Payne's hacks went for the groom's mother, but she knew the driver and that the order had been given to Payne and absolutely refused to enter the conveyance. They had to send another driver to take her to the church. Unfortunately, when she did get there, the bridal couple were just coming out of the building—and she had but one son and he had but that one wife.

Hacks were expensive, and so was their rental. Uncle Lucius had at his home a man digging a trench for a wall. "I could do this better Mr. Nims, if I had me pick," said he. "Where is it, Pat; could your wife find it if I sent a man from the stable for it?" "Sure, me wife is did: you ought to know that, Mr. Nims; I bought four hacks of ye at the toime."

John Kennedy, the very well known tailor, and Tim Claire were sitting one day in the livery office. Finally Mr. Nims closed his account books, turned his revolving chair about and opened the conversation which his visitors desired. "What are you doing now, Mr. Kennedy?" "Well, nothing at all, Mr. Nims." "Why; don't you make any clothes now?" "No, Mr. Nims." "I wouldn't think that Jack Mead could get along without you." Mr. Mead was then the very portly proprietor of the Union House, below the railroad arch, and formerly of the Franklin House on Clay Hill; and his well-tailored snuff-colored suits were known to all Franklin County. "Well," replied Mr. Kennedy, "I do still cut *his* clothes, Mr. Nims, but I have someone else make them up. He is very hard to fit." "Yis, yis, Mr. Nims," eagerly put in Tim Claire, "He's in the way of himself all the time."

An occasional caller at the office was "Vet" Smith, who advertised to "break—no educate" horses. He moved west, but returned with the same stovepipe hat and untidy vest; and when I said "I thought you went





west to grow up with the country" he replied "I did; and when I got to weigh 200 I came back." I have remembered a statement of his which has many applications: "God Almighty can't make a yearling colt in six months." Another old fellow gave my uncle a detailed account of an opportunity he had been given to "get in on the ground floor" of some new scheme. "Well, what did you say to that?" Uncle Lucius asked. "Huh, Lute; I sez to him 'How damned kind!' " That seemed adequate, though terse.

All sorts and conditions of men came to that office; came for horses, of course, but came also for advice: and they got excellent advice, if any, from the proprietor who knew horses perfectly, and men equally well. James S. Grinnell used to come there often. He used to hire "White Nellie" and the basket-phaeton. When he returned to his home at the head of Main street the wise old mare would sedately return to the stable without a driver. She had a wonderfully deep pelt, and I remember whipping her with about as much effect as beating a feather bed. Uncle Lucius used to drive her when he came home to dinner, if she was then hitched up. She would graze about the yard, and if she found herself in the corner under the apple-tree would cramp the wheel and back out. But if the blush rose was in bloom, White Nellie was hitched to the stone post by the pear-tree, because she had a sweet tooth for rose petals and would cross lawn and garden to reach that shrub.

Mr. Grinnell had been chief clerk in the Agricultural Department—which may be the reason for the two ginko trees in Greenfield—and when democrats were less common than today he used to be their candidate for lieutenant governor. I remember that at a time when their hopes seemed especially low, he looked into the little back office—crammed with coats, harnesses, whips, stairway, couch, horse blankets, a great box in which buffalo-robcs were packed away in tobacco, and with but a narrow winding passageway,—then he





sighed, and said "Lucius, do you think we might borrow this room for a democratic convention?"

Before Mr. Nims erected the brick block which has been occupied in recent years by a furniture store, his small wooden office stood there. His brother Thomas, who always owned "the darndest best dog that ever was," was so fond of them that he dreamed dogs. One morning he came down to breakfast and told us that his dream dog had run under that little old building and refused to come out; but Uncle Tom said he had just put one hand on the wall of that livery office and tipped it back far enough so that he reached under and yanked the dog right out.

I undertook once to tell someone how very strong Uncle Tom was, and what an immense weight he lifted with a harness when he was a young fellow on his father's farm in Greenfield Meadows. "Yes," the man replied, "he was strong, all right, but your Uncle Lucius was the only man who could take hold of the pole of one of those big hacks and pull it up the hill from under the barn." "Mostly in knowing how to do it" Uncle Lucius said, when I asked him about the matter; but his physique spoke for itself. I saw him when he drove a young horse up to the house one day and tucked the new tan lines between whip and dash. He was watching the horse, and as it jumped to start up the street he grabbed the reins. Horse and man each got half the lines.

Uncle Tom was, even in his eightieth year, a great handsome chap; and he used to enjoy driving several pairs of horses—particularly, perhaps, when he drove a barge-load around the hairpin bend on the old road up Sugarloaf. During the last weeks of his life I paid him many visits and he talked of "the old farm" and Shelburne mountain. He said, also, that years ago, while he was driving the big barge filled with young men to some event at Shelburne Falls, they got into an argument as to which was the better wrestler—an Englishman, who was superintendent at the Russell cutlery, or another





man. He told me that, to settle it, they stopped at a bend in the road and on the grass in a dell there was a decisive contest, and that ever since the place has been known as Englishman's Bend.

Tom's brother Henry (of whom Judge Aiken said to me "I guess he was the handsomest Nims of his generation") was a deputy sheriff. He was completely fearless, and it is said that as the youngest paymaster in the Union army he paid off troops under fire. His commissions bear the signatures of Lincoln and Johnson, with Stanton as secretary of war. At the time of my story Cheapside was a part of Deerfield, but known as "Toughend," and there were licensed saloons there. Uncle Henry had lost a foot from a bullet wound, but had arrested a "drunk" and Uncle Tom saw them just as Wiley & Russell's force came out of the factory and attempted to rescue their friend the prisoner. It looked to Tom as if his brother needed assistance. A man six feet two inches has a long reach, and he had sufficient weight and muscle, so he moved in an open space toward Henry, who was swinging his club and smiling; but the prisoner was no longer visible. When Tom got over near his brother, he saw that the prisoner was lying on the ground biting Henry's ankle—the cork one!

Their sister used to help with the book-keeping, and as she was long a trustee of the public library and had for years taught in the high school, she was acquainted with almost everyone in town and had many callers at the "livery office." Uncle Lucius and Aunt Delia used to bring home amusing accounts of the doings and sayings there. At one time she was rather puzzled by the frequent changes of costume of a Helbig boy, called Henry and Harry, who was working with the horses. Finally she discovered that "the boy" was twins—one employed in the barn, and the other "taking out teams" and returning others to the stable; each being appropriately dressed, but otherwise indistinguishable.

There was an extension phone in the basement, and





once when my maiden aunt took down the receiver in the office she was scandalized by the succulent sounds made by one of the men who was at the moment sending kisses to his sweetheart. That may have been "Honey-cooler," as one of them was known by that unique title. Another was dubbed by Mr. Williams "Captain Snap," as he was rather easily irritated and quick to express resentment. He was once comfortably seated in the warm office when "Pack" Galvin came in and proceeded to absorb a juicy pear with great gusto. Captain Snap, who had no pear, was greatly annoyed by the resulting sounds and departed hastily for the door, saying tartly before slamming it, "Look out, Pack; you'll wet your feet." It was he who,—when a very near-sighted customer wandering through the rambling barns blundered into a stall instead of a passageway,—sang out to the man who was above "feeding" the grain into the mangers, "Give that one four quarts of oats."

Pack was an institution. He met all trains with the "village coach", and to the returning traveller Pack Galvin appeared much as does the statue of Liberty to an American after a European tour. So familiar a sight was Pack and his chariot that they seemed a pre-vision of home itself. For a quarter they would transport you anywhere within reason, and somewhat beyond. One lady, leisurely preparing for a long journey, was so hurried out of her house,—trunk, bags, bundles and all,—by Pack Galvin that she was sure her clock must have been wrong and that a race for the train was necessary. Sure enough! The trunk was hastily strapped to the rack and Pack whipped up the horses which started on a gallop up Main street toward the station. "Whoa!" A great jolt and a sudden stop. Miss L. looked out the window and saw—a glorious dog-fight! Pack had glimpsed it on the way down, and had rightly calculated to return in time for the finish.

Fred was one of the more dimly shining of the stable satellites. I believe he was the one whom my uncle sent





out to spade up the asparagus bed south of the barn. That it took him a long time to do that—or anything else—surprised no one. When Uncle Lucius later viewed the scene of Fred's strenuous labors he found that every clump of sprouts had been completely uprooted! When Fred announced the arrival of his first baby, and was asked "Boy or girl?" he replied "Guess." "Boy?" was the next question. "Nope," said Fred; "Guess again."

My uncle's employees were continually making remarks which, as reported at our dinner-table by him, ranged from interesting to brilliant. He used to tell Judge John of witty comments made at the stable; and though the proprietor had most of the wit, he would attribute them impartially to the men. These tales were received with appreciation, and he supposed himself to be getting away with it completely, until one day—after a particularly clever sally had been accredited to an especially slow-witted person—John Aiken drawled "Lucius, you have some very clever men working for you."

The foreman, Cephas Smith, was really a most unusual man, and he rendered valuable services until a very advanced age. Without writing or reading, he noted mentally all that went on. He sat at the west window by the driveway, with one foot on the window sill, the sole of its shoe against the window-casing whose wood was deeply worn away. Then, at the end of the day, he would name to my uncle all the horses which had been out during the day, all the people who had hired them, where they had been and what he had told them the price would be; and he would account for all moneys taken in. One day was not like another, and there was a large number of horses.

Mrs. "Ceph" Smith was a famous cook, and took great pride in preparing occasional suppers for the boss and his batchelor friends at the little Smith cottage on Prospect street. Mr. Nims saw to their com-





fort in old age and settled the estate of the survivor.

Jake Bechtold was next to rank to Mr. Smith, and lived over the stores in the Miller Block after my uncle bought it. He looked out well for the interests of his employer, and sometimes worked the horses rather harder than their owner would have done. One rather flashy "gent", who liked to drive a fast pair but was very "slow pay," tried on a busy Sunday to hire a pair to drive to Conway. Jake demurred, and said that the horses were very busy and that the last ride was not yet paid for. "I'm going to pay for that right now" said the customer as he produced a five-dollar bill. Rosy-faced Jake beamed happily as he pocketed the money and murmured "That's fine; that's all right: now if you will give me another you can take the pair today."

Jake's parents, Stephen and Katie, lived in a cottage on a knoll, surrounded by apple trees. Aiken and Nims liked good German cooking also. When Katie, seated in a big rocking chair on her porch with the weekly *Gazette and Courier* in her two hands, read that Joseph Bradley's second wife had died, she passed on the information in these words: "Ste-von; I see by der paper that Jo Bradley his wife's dead again, alretty." Katie offered my aunt some nice apples, assuring her that they were all "hen' pecked:" of course Miss Nims soon realized that they had been carefully hand picked, and were not mere "windfalls."

The boss treated all his men with consideration and most of them appreciated his kindness. One, whose inefficiency was rather annoying, used to strike occasionally for higher wages; but Uncle Lucius always hired him back again, for the excellent reason that he feared the fellow couldn't get employment anywhere else. Considerably later than at the age when most men feel that Father Time has an appraising eye upon them, Mr. Nims began to lessen replacements of carriages, horses, etc. He would have liked to help two faithful employees to continue the business, but was not blind





to the future of the automobile and was unwilling that they should make a venture which might prove unsuccessful.

He had not then, nor did he for a considerable time longer, become old except in unperceived years. His retirement from business was as gradual as the falling of autumn leaves: things wore out or were sold and were not replaced and finally there was nothing left. Then he sold the real estate to Charles W. Nims and me on easy terms and we rented it for other purposes. He retired to his home, in which he was so intelligently cared for by a devoted wife that in his eighties he was still well and strong, though no other member of his family lived four score years. A neighbor, forced by illness to retire from active life, asked my uncle his "recipe for loafing." Mr. Nims replied, "You will find that loafing will take more of your time than anything you ever tried."

As a young man he used to make trips to the west to buy horses. The profits from judicious buying and selling went into his father's farm. He had a fine father, a great asset for a young man, and had a remarkable mother whose decisions were never questioned.

I well remember trying to minimize the failings of a neighbor by stating that he was good to his mother. "Good to his mother!", exploded Uncle Lucius, "He *ought* to be good to her: it's no credit to a man to be good to his *mother*." He was certainly the best of sons and brothers, and he asked no credit for his goodness to his kindred or to anyone else. He was too self-reliant to be what is sometimes called philanthropic, but no man was more helpful to his fellow men and his wit was kindly because that was his nature.

He was too able, industrious and thrifty a man not to accumulate some property in a long life; but he had a very true sense of proportion and did not overestimate the importance of money. Because of the conservative accuracy of his estimates, he was on the board of invest-





ment of The Franklin Savings Institution for many years, and many individuals sought his opinions on the purchase of real estate. I recall one man who feared that he was being asked about \$400 more than his building lot was really worth, and was told that if it was exactly what he wanted and he wasn't paying more than that amount above its actual value, he was "getting it cheap." On his books were many accounts for which no bill was ever sent. I think that he never asked more than 5% on a mortgage loan; and he probably never loaned an excessive amount. He owned very little real estate except that which he needed for his home and business. Had he chosen to buy and sell, it would have been very profitable.

It always amused me to think that "Rashe" Hoyt tried to sell Uncle Lucius (of all men) a part of the meadow at the north end of "the town street" of Deerfield. Its flora and fauna, since the day the first settler left that region to build "Frary House," had consisted of cattails and skunk cabbage, muskrats and bull-frogs; but Rashe laid a hand on my uncle's knee, and in his usual confidential tones said "I tell you, Lucius; barring the absence of Eve, that might be the garden of Eden." I suppose that demonstrates the truth—that hope springs eternal in the breast of even a realtor.

Sundays during the warmer part of the year were busy days for the owners of livery stables. In winter Lucius Nims attended the Second Congregational church pretty regularly. He always timed the sermon, and I am sure appraised with accuracy its value. He had standards of conduct from which he never deviated. For eighty years he knelt by his bed each night to pray; but during those four-score years I think that was unknown to any others, except his mother and wife.

A real Nims has certain characteristics: he thinks it foolish to tell what he is going to do, and unnecessary to tell what he has done: he is a creature of habit: he has a sense of humor—to be a bit whimsical is quite





Nimsical. Concerning their appearance and physique, as this is a story of both horses and men, I will quote that shrewd physician, Frank H. Zabriskie, who said of the Nimses "They mark their get like a Morgan horse." True it is that at the Nims reunion in 1914 I mistook a stranger's profile for that of my uncle; and, when I learned who the man was, I found that their nearest common ancestor was Godfrey Nims of Old Deerfield, who died about 1705. An old photograph of Major Henry Nims was mistaken for a picture of his cousin's grandson by that young man's sisters.

I have a framed picture of a young woman with her riding horse, which hung in Uncle Lucius' home during all his life, because when he was a child he used to think it a picture of his mother. In the old days one spoke of horses and Nimses in the same breath, and I have here continued the practice—being "a creature of habit." I have retold old tales, which have never been in print and are unworthy of that distinction, unless by repetition they have become Pocumtuck Valley history. My wife said that they must be true, because I always told them the same way.

Charlie Packard and I sometimes walk down street together and listen with real interest to our own old stories of Old Greenfield; and before we part one or the other says: "When are we going to write that second supplement to the History of Greenfield?" Perhaps this is its first chapter. I go into Hollister's jewelry store and Mr. Hollister—I call him Mister to emphasize the fact that there are some local people older than I am—he pulls open a drawer and produces an old document and tells me of things that happened before my recollection. We were born in the same room at west Main street, and as evidence of our fraternity he recently took from that drawer an onyx inkwell, which was used a century ago by one of my predecessors on the bench, and gave it to me. I use it daily. Charlie Winslow brings out his collection of photographs of Greenfield buildings that





have been burned up or pulled down; and all these things are as grist for my mill.

The last time that I took our former councillor Albert Wing to spend the night with me at High Pine we sat at the table in the out-door room and watched the shadows cross the meadows and the town, and climb to the top of the Poet's Seat tower; and then we sat before the stone chimney and fireplace, that I had built thirty years earlier, and talked of local men and events. Before we went to bed he said "Well, Francis; there are no odd characters any more", and I said to him, as I now say to you, "No; unless you and I have taken their places."





## FORMER PRESIDENTS

George Sheldon, John Sheldon, Jennie M. Arms Sheldon.

## FORMER RECORDING SECRETARIES

N. Hitchcock, Margaret Miller, Rev. R. E. Birks, Wm. L. Harris.

## FORMER TREASURERS

Nathaniel Hitchcock, John Sheldon, George Arms Sheldon.

## OFFICERS FOR 1942

*President*, Francis Nims Thompson, *Court House, Greenfield.*

*Vice Presidents*, Hazel Sheldon Nichols, Edward E. Whiting.

*Recording Secretary*, Margaret Harris Allen.

*Treasurer*, W. Herbert Nichols, *220 Main St., Greenfield.*

*Council*, the above officers and the following: Jonathan P. Ashley, Ernest E. Coffin, Mary W. Fuller and Margaret C. Whiting, until February 23, 1943; Frank L. Boyden, Minnie Ellen Hawks, Mary Adams Ball and Jane Atherton Wright, 1944; Helen C. Boyden, John W. Heselton, Lucy Cutler Kellogg and Agnes P. Sheldon, 1945.

## TRUSTEES

*George Sheldon Memorial Fund*: Agnes P. Sheldon, 1943; W. Herbert Nichols, 1944; Frank L. Boyden, 1945.

*Sheldon Publishing Fund*: Margaret C. Whiting, 1943; Hazel Sheldon Nichols, 1944; Jonathan P. Ashley, 1945.

*Old Indian House Homestead*: W. Herbert Nichols, 1946; William L. Harris, 1948; Margaret Harris Allen, 1950.

*Charlotte Alice Baker Fund*: Curators of the Frary House Estate.

*The Permanent Fund*: The Finance Committee, named below.

## COMMITTEES

*Executive*: President, Treasurer and Frank L. Boyden.

*Finance*: John W. Heselton, Hazel S. Nichols, F. N. Thompson.

*Auditors*: Ernest E. Coffin, Claude L. Allen.

## MEMORIAL HALL

Houses the unique *Sheldon Collection* of Colonial, Indian and pre-historic relics, and memorials of dwellers in the Pocumtuck (or Deerfield) valley. In charge of the *Executive Committee*, named above.

## FRARY HOUSE

Gift of C. Alice Baker. The oldest dwelling in this region; containing much antique furniture and furnishings. Margaret Harris Allen, Helen Childs Boyden, W. Herbert Nichols, *Curators of the Frary House Estate.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: [Illegible]

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4. [Illegible]

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5. [Illegible]

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6. [Illegible]

[Illegible]

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[Illegible]

7. [Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]

[Illegible]











